

MODERN PLAYS FOR STUDENTS 3

ARTHUR MILLER

ALL MY SONS

a play in three acts

edited for students by

NISSIM EZEKIEL

Reader in American Literature, University of Bombay

MADRAS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA

A LIST OF
The Principal Works of Thomas Mann
WILL BE FOUND AT
THE END OF THIS E

MODERN PLAYS FOR STUDENTS 3

ARTHUR MILLER

ALL MY SONS

a play in three acts

edited for students by

NISSIM EZEKIEL

Reader in American Literature, University of Bombay

MADRAS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

*Copyright by Thomas Mann, 1930
First published 1930 by Harrison of Paris
in a limited edition of
785 copies*

*First published in England 1961 by
Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd
7 John Street, London
W.C.1*

*Printed by The Camelot Press Ltd
London and Southampton*

CONTENTS

A NOTE ON ARTHUR MILLER	v
-------------------------	---

ALL MY SONS

ACT ONE	An early Sunday morning in August	1
ACT TWO	The same evening, as twilight falls	42
ACT THREE	Two o'clock the following morning	77

COMMENTARY

THE BACKGROUND OF THE PLAY	91
THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY	95
THEMES AND IDEAS IN THE PLAY	98

NOTES ON THE TEXT	102
-------------------	-----

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

in a spacious and dignified house built by my father; but we had a second home in the old family dwelling beside Saint Mary's, where my paternal grandmother lived alone, and which today is shown to the curious as "the Buddenbrook house." The brightest hours of my youth were those summer holidays at Travemünde on the Baltic bay: with the mornings spent bathing at the beach, and the afternoons, almost as passionately loved, by the steps of the bandstand opposite the gardens of the hotel. That idyllic life—well-tended, carefree, with many-coursed table d'hôte meals—appealed to me inexpressibly. It encouraged my native tendency to idleness and dreams—corrected much later and with difficulty; and when the four weeks, which had seemed a little eternity when they began, were over and we returned to daily life, my breast was torn with tender, self-pitying pangs.

School I loathed, and to the end failed to satisfy its demands. I despised it as a milieu, I was critical of the manners of its masters, and I early espoused a sort of literary opposition to its spirit, its discipline, and its methods of training. My indolence, necessary perhaps to my particular growth; my need of much free time for leisure and quiet reading; an actual heaviness of spirit—even today I suffer from it—made me hate being

A NOTE ON ARTHUR MILLER

Arthur Miller was born of Jewish parents in Manhattan, the main borough of New York City, in 1915. His father was financially ruined in the great economic Depression, and the family moved to Brooklyn, a less prosperous part of the city, in 1929. He completed his schooling in Brooklyn but could not go on to college. Instead, he worked in an automobile parts warehouse and held several other jobs of the same kind. In 1934, he took a course in journalism at the University of Michigan. While there, he wrote plays and won awards for them, *Honors at Dawn* in 1936 and *No Villain* the following year.

Miller graduated in 1938 and also won the Theatre Guild National Award for *They Too Arise*. For the next eight years or so, he was variously active, both in regular jobs and as a writer. *All My Sons*, his first commercially successful play, was staged in 1947 and received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. He went on to write his celebrated play, *Death of a Salesman*, in 1948. It is said that this play had been taking shape in his mind for ten years, though he wrote it in six weeks. It ran for 742 performances on Broadway. *Death of a Salesman* received the Pulitzer Prize for theatre and made a notable film.

The Crucible (1953), a play dealing with a witch hunt in Salem (Massachusetts, U.S.A.) in 1692, was rightly assumed to have a contemporary relevance in view of the persecution of real and alleged Communists in the America of the fifties. This was followed by *A View from the Bridge* in 1955, a tragedy of sexual rivalry and betrayal.

Miller's *Collected Plays* appeared in 1957 and he wrote an Introduction to it which lucidly expounds his convictions as a man and as a dramatist. *After the Fall* and

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

I had begun with childish plays, which I and my younger brothers and sisters performed before our parents and aunts. Then there were poems, inscribed to a dear friend, the one who as Hans Hansen, in *Tonio Kröger*, has a sort of symbolic existence, though in real life he took to drink and made a melancholy end in Africa. What became of the flaxen-haired dancing partner who later was the object of love lyrics, I cannot say.

Only much later did I try to write tales, and then it was after a phase of critical essays: when I was in the second form I and some radical-minded first-formers got out a periodical called *Der Frühlingssturm* (*Spring Storm*)—not a very proper school paper, I fear—wherein I chiefly shone as a writer of philosophic and revolutionary articles.

Five years ago I visited Lübeck, on the Free City's seven hundredth anniversary, and renewed acquaintance with the master of the lower second who also had taught Latin and German. I told the snowy-haired Emeritus that I knew he had always found me a thorough good-for-nothing, but that I had quietly taken in a good deal in his classes none the less. And in evidence I cited the set phrase in which he always extolled to us Schiller's ballads: "This is not just *any* reading

is also the author of radio and screen plays. Several books have been written on him, a score of doctoral theses and more than a hundred major articles.

Students are advised to consult Arthur Miller by Leonard Moss in Twayne's United States Authors Series (Twayne Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1967) and Arthur Miller Portrait of a Playwright by Benjamin Nelson (David McKay Company, Inc.: New York, 1970).

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

nobility and gentry, until my school life gradually dwindled to an end.

Of this period I have the most jovial memories. The "institution" had given up all hope for me. It left me to my fate, and that was dark to me; but, feeling myself quite hearty and clever, I was not cast down. I sat away the hours. Outside school I lived very much as I liked, and stood well with my fellow boarders, in whose premature drinking bouts I gaily condescended to take part now and then. In the fullness of time I got my certificate and took my leave, following my family to Munich, where, with the word "temporary" in my heart, I entered an insurance office managed by a friend of my father, who had earlier carried on the same kind of business in Lübeck.

A singular interlude. I sat at my sloping desk surrounded by snuff-taking clerks and copied out accounts; but secretly I also wrote my first tale, a love-story called *Gefallen*. It earned me my first literary success. For not only was it published in *Die Gesellschaft*, M. G. Conrad's radical-naturalistic polemical monthly, which—while I was still at school—had published a poem of mine that

is also the author of radio and screen plays. Several books have been written on him, a score of doctoral theses and more than a hundred major articles.

Students are advised to consult Arthur Miller by Leonard Moss in Twayne's United States Authors Series (Twayne Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1967) and Arthur Miller: Portrait of a Playwright by Benjamin Nelson (David McKay Company, Inc.: New York, 1970).

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

I enjoyed a little esteem as the author of *Gefallen*. The student I saw most of was a young North German law student named Koch, a clever chap who became a lawyer and later the burgomaster of Cassel. Under the name Koch-Weser he has had an important political career: after the Revolution he became Home Secretary, and is today the leader of the Democratic Party of Germany.

Even established authors and writers sometimes visited our youthful group: Otto Erich Hartleben, Istrati Panizza, J. Schaumberger, L. Scharf, old Heinrich von Reder. The most important event during my time was the first German performance of Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*; Ernst von Wolzogen produced it for the club, and it had a literary success despite the protests of a conservative public. Wolzogen played old Ekdal, Hans Olden the writer was Hjalmar, and I, in Wolzogen's fur coat and spectacles, took the part of Werle the wholesale merchant. At later meetings Wolzogen used to remark facetiously that he had discovered me.

My brother Heinrich, four years older than I, later to be the author of such important and

ACT ONE

The back yard of the Keller home in the outskirts of an American town. August of our era.

The stage is hedged on right and left by tall, closely planted poplars which lend the yard a secluded atmosphere. Upstage is filled with the back of the house and its open, unroofed porch which extends into the yard some six feet. The house is two storeys high and has seven rooms. It would have cost perhaps fifteen thousand in the early twenties when it was built. Now it is nicely painted, looks tight and comfortable, and the yard is green with sod, here and there plants whose season is gone. At the right, beside the house, the entrance of the driveway can be seen, but the poplars cut off view of its continuation downstage. In the left corner, downstage, stands the four-foot-high stump of a slender apple-tree whose upper trunk and branches lie toppled beside it, fruit still clinging to its branches.

Downstage right is a small, trellised arbor, shaped like a sea shell, with a decorative bulb hanging from its forward-curving roof. Garden chairs and a table are scattered about. A garbage pail on the ground next to the porch steps, a wire leaf-burner near it.

On the rise; it is early Sunday morning. JOE KELLER is sitting in the sun reading the want ads of the Sunday paper, the other sections of which lie neatly on the ground beside him. Behind his back, inside the arbor, DOCTOR JIM BAYLISS is reading part of the paper at the table.

KELLER is nearing sixty. A heavy man of ^{frail}stolid mind and build, a business man these many years, but with the imprint of the machine-shop worker and boss still upon him. When he reads, when he speaks, when he listens, it is with the

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

apotheosis of my entirely pessimistic, moralizing, anti-hedonistic frame of mind. I enjoyed going to Saint Peter's and hearing Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, in all the pride of his humility read mass. He was an uncommonly decorative personage, and on aesthetic grounds I later felt sorry that diplomatic considerations prevented his elevation to the Chair of Saint Peter.

Our mother enjoyed the income of a moderate middle-class fortune, whose heirs we children were, according to my father's will. She gave us brothers a hundred and sixty or eighty marks a month each, a remittance which improved in the Italian exchange and to us meant a great deal: economic freedom, the power to bide our time. If we did not want too much, we could do what we wanted—and we did. My brother, who originally meant to be an artist, sketched a great deal, while I, in the reek of endless three-centesimi cigarettes, devoured Scandinavian and Russian literature and wrote. The successes that gradually came my way rejoiced me but did not surprise. My attitude toward life was compact of indolence, bad civic conscience, and the sure and certain feeling of latent powers. In those days I had a letter from Ludwig Jakobowsky, who was editing *Die Gesellschaft* in Leipzig. I had sent him a

FRANK: What's the difference, it's all bad news. What's today's calamity?

KELLER: I don't know, I don't read the news part any more. It's more interesting in the want ads.

FRANK: Why, you trying to buy something?

KELLER: No, I'm just interested. To see what people want, y'know? For instance, here's a guy is lookin' for two Newfoundland dogs. Now what's he want with two Newfoundland dogs?

FRANK: That is funny.

KELLER: Here's another one. Wanted—old dictionaries. High prices paid. Now what's a man going to do with an old dictionary?

FRANK: Why not? Probably a book collector.

KELLER: You mean he'll make a living out of that?

FRANK: Sure, there's a lot of them.

KELLER [*shaking his head*]: All the kind of business goin' on. In my day, either you were a lawyer, or a doctor, or you worked in a shop. Now—

FRANK: Well. I was going to be a forester once.

KELLER: Well, that shows you; in my day, there was no such thing. [*Scanning the page, sweeping it with his hand.*] You look at a page like this you realize how ignorant you are. [*Softly, with wonder, as he scans page*] Psss!

FRANK [*noticing tree*]: Hey, what happened to your tree?

KELLER: Ain't that awful? The wind must've got it last night. You heard the wind, didn't you?

FRANK: Yeah, I got a mess in my yard, too. [*Goes to tree.*] What a pity. [*Turning to KELLER.*] What'd Kate say?

KELLER: They're all asleep yet. I'm just waiting for her to see it.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

solemnly laid forth on the extension table which I had draped with green baize, I spent whole days squatting before the wicker chairs I had bought "in the white" and painting them with red enamel. There is a description of such a Bohemian ménage in *The Wardrobe*, a story—written in the Markstrasse in Schwabing—which first saw the light in the *Neue Deutsche Rundschau*.

Korfiz Holm was at that time a member of the publishing house of Langen, whose head, like Wedekind, was living abroad under a charge of *lèse-majesté*. Holm was Baltic by birth and a friend from Lübeck days, where he had been graduated from the first form. He met me on the street one day and offered me a position on *Simplicissimus*, with a hundred marks a month. For about a year—until Langen, still in Paris, abolished the job I held—I worked as reader and press reader in the fine offices on Schackstrasse. My particular task was to make the first selection from the incoming short-story manuscripts and to submit my suggestions to my superior, Dr. Geheeb, brother of the Landschule educationist. This occupation had some sense. I liked the magazine, had always preferred it to Georg Hirt's *Jugend*, whose sprightliness I found philistine; and had accordingly been made happy by the appearance in two early numbers of a tale

FRANK: [*peevd*]: The trouble with you is, you don't believe in anything.

JIM: And your trouble is that you believe in *anything*. You didn't see my kid this morning, did you?

FRANK: No.

KELLER: Imagine? He walked off with his thermometer. Right out of his bag.

JIM [*getting up*]: What a problem. One look at a girl and he takes her temperature. [*Goes to driveway, looks up-stage towards street.*]

FRANK: That boy's going to be a real doctor; he's smart.

JIM: Over my dead body he'll be a doctor. A good beginning, too.

FRANK: Why? It's an honorable profession.

JIM [*looking at him tiredly*]: Frank, will you stop talking like a civics book? [KELLER *laughs*.]

FRANK: Why, I saw a movie a couple of weeks ago, reminded me of you. There was a doctor in that picture—

KELLER: Don Ameche!

FRANK: I think it was, yeah. And he worked in his basement discovering things. That's what you ought to do; you could help humanity, instead of—

JIM: I would love to help humanity on a Warner Brothers salary.

KELLER [*pointing at him, laughing*]: That's very good, Jim.

JIM [*looking towards house*]: Well, where's the beautiful girl was supposed to be here?

FRANK: [*excited*]: Annie came?

KELLER: Sure, sleepin' upstairs. We picked her up on the one o'clock train last night. Wonderful thing. Girl leaves here, a scrawny kid. Couple of years go by, she's a regular woman. Hardly recognized her, and she was

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

appreciation this little work by an author so much younger and so differently constituted. On my side, I have always heartily loved and admired his *Lausbubengeschichten* and *Filserbriefe*. Now and again I spent an evening in the Odeon Bar with him and other *Simplicissimus* people: Geheeb, Th. Th. Heine, Thöny, Reznicek, among others. Thoma slept most of the time, his cold pipe in his mouth.

I said above that my relation with this flippancy and truly artistic sphere—the best “München” there has ever been—was a fitting one. But not all of my nature was involved in it. They had given me the luxury of an office of my own, with a desk for my editorial activities; but alongside these ran the claims of my personal concern, the work on *Buddenbrooks*—to which I entirely devoted myself once more, after my connection with the house of Langen was severed.

I sometimes read aloud out of it to my mother, brothers and sisters, and friends. It was a family entertainment, like another. They laughed, and I think I am right in saying that they thought I was merely amusing myself and them with this obstinate and ambitious enterprise. At best it was

SUE [*laughing, pointing at him*]: Now you said it !

[LYDIA LUBEY *enters. She is a robust, laughing girl of twenty-seven.*]

LYDIA: Frank, the toaster—[*Sees the others.*] Hya.

KELLER: Hello !

LYDIA [*to FRANK*]: The toaster is off again.

FRANK: Well, plug it in, I just fixed it.

LYDIA [*kindly, but insistently*]: Please, dear, fix it back like it was before.

FRANK: I don't know why you can't learn to turn on a simple thing like a toaster ! [*He exits.*]

SUE [*laughing*]: Thomas Edison.

LYDIA [*apologetically*]: He's really very handy. [*She sees broken tree.*] Oh, did the wind get your tree ?

KELLER: Yeah, last night.

LYDIA: Oh, what a pity. Annie get in ?

KELLER: She'll be down soon. Wait'll you meet her, Sue, she's a knockout.

SUE: I should've been a man. People are always introducing me to beautiful women. [*To JOE*] Tell her to come over later : I imagine she'd like to see what we did with her house. And thanks. [*She exits.*]

LYDIA: Is she still unhappy, Joe ?

KELLER: Annie ? I don't suppose she goes around dancing on her toes, but she seems to be over it.

LYDIA: She going to get married ? Is there anybody—?

KELLER: I suppose—say, it's a couple years already. She can't mourn a boy for ever.

LYDIA: It's so strange—Annie's here and not even married. And I've got three babies. I always thought it'd be the other way around.

KELLER: Well, that's what a war does. I had two sons. now I got one. It changed all the tallies. In my day when

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

I was such an impassioned bicycle rider at that time that I scarcely went a step on foot, but even in a pouring rain took my way, in cloak and galoshes, upon my machine. I carried it on my shoulder up the three flights of stairs to my flat, where it lived in the kitchen. Mornings, after my work, I used to stand it on its saddle and clean it. Another task, before I shaved and went to town, was cleaning my oil stove. A char-woman "did" my rooms while I ate my one-mark-twenty meal. Summer afternoons I rode into the Schleissheimer woods with a book on my handlebar. My supper I bought in a Schwabing provision shop, and washed it down with tea or beef extract.

I had close and sympathetic relations with Kurt Martens, the author of novels and short stories; he has vividly commemorated this friendship, in which he had taken the initiative, in his memoirs. He belonged to the few people—I could count them on the fingers of one hand—whom I ever addressed as "*du*." The designer Markus Behmer visited me too, and was enthusiastic over my story, *The Wardrobe*. Also, Arthur Holitscher, for whose latest novel I had spoken at Langen's; we played music together. I read from *Buddenbrooks* to him and Martens. Holitscher, the aesthete and later communist,

[KELLER] *shakes his head, puts knife down on bench, takes oilstone up to the cabinet.*

KELLER: Psss ! Annie up yet ?

CHRIS: Mother's giving her breakfast in the dining-room.

KELLER [*looking at broken tree*]: See what happened to the tree?

CHRIS [*without looking up*]: Yeah.

KELLER: What's Mother going to say?

[BERT runs on from driveway. He is about eight. He jumps on stool, then on KELLER's back.]

BERT: You're finally up.

KELLER [*swinging him around and putting him down*]:

Ha ! Bert's here ! Where's Tommy ? He's got his father's thermometer again.

BERT: He's taking a reading.

CHRIS: What !

BERT: But it's only oral.

KELLER: Oh, well, there's no harm in oral. So what's new this morning Bert ?

BERT: Nothin'. [*He goes to broken tree, walks around it.*]

KELLER: Then you couldn't've made a complete inspection of the block. In the beginning, when I first made you a policeman you used to come in every morning with something new. Now, nothin's ever new.

BERT: Except some kids from Thirtieth Street. They started kicking a can down the block, and I made them go away because you were sleeping.

KELLER: Now you're talkin', Bert. Now you're on the ball. First thing you know I'm liable to make you a detective.

BERT [*pulling him down by the lapel and whispering in his ear*]: Can I see the jail now ?

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

the intellectual and stylistic influence of Nietzsche. In *The Reflections of a Non-Political Man* I have described my attitude of mind toward that whole compelling complex and traced it back to the personal factors that delimited and conditioned it. Certainly the contact with Nietzsche was to a high degree decisive for an intellect still in its formative stage; but to alter our very substance, to make something different out of us from what we are—that no cultural force is in a position to do; every possibility of cultural growth must presuppose an entity which possesses the instinctive will and capacity to make personal choices, to assimilate what it receives and work it over to suit its peculiar needs. Goethe says that to do something one must be something. But even to learn something, in any higher sense, one must be something. I leave to the critics to investigate—should they feel so inclined—what sort of modification, what sort of transmutation the art and ethos of Nietzsche suffered in my case. It was, at all events, a complicated sort; it held itself scornfully aloof from the fashionable and popular doctrines of Nietzscheism—the cult of the superman, the easy “Renaissancism,” the Caesar Borgia aesthetics, all the “blood-and-beauty mouthings then in vogue. The youth of twenty was clear upon the relativity of this great moralist’s

KELLER [*calling after him*]: And mum's the word, Bert.

[BERT stops and sticks his head through the arbor.]

BERT: About what?

KELLER: Just in general. Be v-e-r-y careful.

BERT [*nodding in bewilderment*]: Okay. [*He exits.*]

KELLER [*laughing*]: I got all the kids crazy!

CHRIS: One of these days, they'll all come in here and beat your brains out.

KELLER: What's she going to say? Maybe we ought to tell her before she sees it.

CHRIS: She saw it.

KELLER: How could she see it? I was the first one up.
She was still in bed.

CHRIS: She was out here when it broke

KELLER: When?

CHRIS: About four this morning. [*Indicating window above them.*] I heard it cracking and I woke up and looked out. She was standing right here when it cracked.

KELLER: What was she doing out here four in the morning?

CHRIS: I don't know. When it cracked she ran back into the house and cried in the kitchen.

KELLER: Did you talk to her?

CHRIS: No, I—I figured the best thing was to leave her alone. [*Pause.*]

KELLER [*deeply touched*]: She cried hard?

CHRIS: I could hear her right through the floor of my room.

KELLER [*after a slight pause*]: What was she doing out here at that hour? [*CHRIS silent. With an undertone of anger showing.*] She's dreaming about him again. She's walking around at night.

CHRIS: I guess she is.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

almost be called making a bourgeois of him. It seemed to me then, and still seems today, profounder and shrewder than all the heroic-aesthetic paroxysms for which Nietzsche was responsible in literature. My Nietzsche experience was the prelude to a period of conservative thinking, from which I graduated at the time of the war; but it made me finally proof against the baleful romantic attraction which can—and today so often does—proceed from an *un*-human valuation of the relation between life and mind.

The whole experience, moreover, was not a matter of a single swift discovery and acceptance; it happened, as it were, in a series of thrusts extending over several years. Its earliest effect was a psychological susceptibility, a power of vision, a melancholy, which even today I hardly understand, but under which I had to suffer indescribably. Tonio Kröger says there is such a thing as being “sick of knowledge.” The phrase describes quite accurately that sickness of my youth. If I remember rightly, it played a great part in making me receptive to the philosophy of Schopenhauer, to which I came only after some acquaintance with Nietzsche. *That* was a spiritual experience of absolutely first rank and unforgettable in kind—whereas the Nietzsche experience was more intellectual and artistic. With the

KELLER: The trouble is the goddam newspapers. Every month some boy turns up from nowhere, so the next one is going to be Larry, so—

CHRIS: All right, all right, listen to me. [*Slight pause. KELLER sits on settee.*] You know why I asked Annie here, don't you?

KELLER [*he knows, but—*]: Why?

CHRIS: You know.

KELLER: Well, I got an idea, but—What's the story?

CHRIS: I'm going to ask her to marry me. [*Slight pause.*]
[KELLER *nods.*]

KELLER: Well, that's only your business, Chris.

CHRIS: You know it's not only my business.

KELLER: What do you want me to do? You're old enough to know your own mind.

CHRIS [*asking, annoyed*]: Then it's all right, I'll go ahead with it?

KELLER: Well, you want to be sure Mother isn't going to—

CHRIS: Then it isn't just my business.

KELLER: I'm just sayin'—

CHRIS: Sometimes you infuriate me, you know that? Isn't it your business, too, if I tell this to Mother and she throws a fit about it? You have such a talent for ignoring things.

KELLER: I ignore what I gotta ignore. The girl is Larry's girl.

CHRIS: She's not Larry's girl.

KELLER: From Mother's point of view he is not dead and you have no right to take his girl. [*Slight pause.*] Now you can go on from there if you know where to go, but I'm tellin' you I don't know where to go. See? I don't know. Now what can I do for you?

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

no means an act of "wisdom." Ah, youth, with its sacred pangs, its urgency, its disorders! It was a happy chance that these supra-bourgeois experiences of mine fell at a time when I could weave them into the close of my bourgeois novel, where they served to prepare Thomas Budenbrook for death.

The novel was finished at the turn of the century; I had worked on it, off and on, for some two and a half years. The manuscript went to Fischer, with whom, after *Little Herr Friedemann*, I felt I had a connection. I still remember packing it; clumsily dropping the hot wax on my hand and making a big blister which was to hurt for days. It was an impossible manuscript, written on both sides. I had meant to copy it, but this job got the upper hand of me and I gave it up. Thus, the manuscript looked shorter than it was, but on all counts was a harsh test for readers and typesetters. There was but the one and only copy, so I registered it, and after the word "manuscript" on the wrapper wrote down a value of one thousand marks. The post-office clerk smiled.

The anxious consultations at Fischer's over my shapeless offering took place while I was on

CHRIS: I've given it three years of thought. I'd hoped that if I waited, Mother would forget Larry and then we'd have a regular wedding and everything happy. But if that can't happen here, then I'll have to get out.

KELLER: What the hell is *this*?

CHRIS: I'll get out. I'll get married and live some place else. Maybe in New York.

KELLER: Are you crazy?

CHRIS: I've been a good son too long, a good sucker. I'm through with it.

KELLER: You've got a business here, what the hell is this?

CHRIS: The business! The business doesn't inspire me.

KELLER: Must you be inspired?

CHRIS: Yes. I like it an hour a day. If I have to grub for money all day long at least at evening I want it beautiful. I want a family, I want some kids, I want to build something I can give myself to. Annie is in the middle of that. Now . . . where do I find it?

KELLER: You mean—[*Goes to him.*] Tell me something, you mean you'd leave the business?

CHRIS: Yes. On this I would.

KELLER [*after a pause*]: Well . . . you don't want to think like that.

CHRIS: Then help me stay here.

KELLER: All right, but—but don't think like that. Because what the hell did I work for? That's only for you, Chris, the whole shootin' match is for you! §

CHRIS: I know that, Dad. Just you help me stay here.

KELLER [*putting a fist up to CHRIS's jaw*]: But don't think that way, you hear me?

CHRIS: I am thinking that way.

KELLER [*lowering his hand*]: I don't understand you, do I?

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Reserve"—which amounted to final release. Never again have I had any personal connection with the army. Neither did the war lay hand on me physically, simply because the first doctor to whom I was taken had read my books; he laid his hand on my bare shoulder and declared: "You shall be left alone." The others later submitted to his verdict.

In the meantime the publishing house in Berlin had been troubled with doubts and scruples—apparently only too well justified—concerning my manuscript. But these were overcome—partly in consequence of a letter I sent to Fischer from the garrison hospital. I wrote in pencil, protesting against the suggestions to shorten the book, and declaring that its length was an essential characteristic, not to be laid hands on lightly. The letter, written and sent under the spur of strong feeling, did not fail of its effect. Fischer decided to publish, and *Buddenbrooks* came out at the end of 1900—with the imprint of 1901—in two yellow paper volumes costing six marks each.

Let no one suppose that the book went well from the start. The publisher's fears seemed

[MOTHER comes out on last line. She carries a pot of string beans.]

MOTHER: It's her day off, what are you crabbing about?

CHRIS [to MOTHER]: Isn't Annie finished eating?

MOTHER [looking around preoccupiedly at yard]: She'll be right out. [Moves.] That wind did some job on this place. [Of the tree.] So much for that, thank God.

KELLER [indicating chair beside him]: Sit down, take it easy.

MOTHER [pressing her hand to top of her head]: I've got such a funny pain on the top of my head.

CHRIS: Can I get you an aspirin?

[MOTHER picks a few petals off ground, stands there smelling them in her hand, then sprinkles them over plants.]

MOTHER: No more roses. It's so funny . . . everything decides to happen at the same time. This month is his birthday [his tree blows down] Annie comes. Everything that happened seems to be coming back. I was just down the cellar, and what do I stumble over? His baseball glove. I haven't seen it in a century.

CHRIS: Don't you think Annie looks well?

MOTHER: Fine. There's no question about it. She's a beauty. . . . I still don't know what brought her here. Not that I'm not glad to see her, but—

CHRIS: I just thought we'd all like to see each other again. [MOTHER just looks at him, nodding ever slightly—almost as though admitting something.] And I wanted to see her myself.

MOTHER [as her nods halt, to KELLER]: The only thing is I think her nose got longer. But I'll always love that girl. She's one that didn't jump into bed with somebody else as soon as it happened with her fella.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

printings began to tread on one another's heels.

It was fame. I was snatched up into a whirl of success, just as twice later in my life, within a few years: on the occasion of my fiftieth birthday, and again now, with the Nobel Prize award. Each time I have gone through it with mixed feelings, full of gratitude and incredulity. My mail was swollen, money flowed in streams, my picture appeared in the papers, a hundred pens made copy of the product of my secluded hours, the world embraced me amid congratulations and shouts of praise.

The moods and feelings of this time have many of them been embodied in the dramatic dialogues of *Fiorenza*. A failure as a finished product, though not without boldness in design, in five and twenty years it has not ceased to ruffle faintly the theatrical waters, and on occasion has floated upon them. Part of it is most personal and primordial: the youthful love of fame, the fear of fame, in one early involved in its toils: "O world! O deep delight. O love-dream of power, so sweet, consuming! One may not possess. Yearning is giant power, possession unmans."

Fiorenza came out in 1906. It was preceded by the volume of short stories that contained *Tonio Kröger*—of all I have written perhaps still

me . . . Mom, Mom ! I could hear him like he was in the room. Mom ! . . . it was his voice ! If I could touch him I knew I could stop him, if I could only—[*Breaks off, allowing her outstretched hand to fall.*] I woke up and it was so funny—The wind . . . it was like the roaring of his engine. I came out here . . . I must've still been half asleep. I could hear that roaring like he was going by. The tree snapped right in front of me—and I like—came awake. [*She is looking at tree. She suddenly realizes something, turns with a reprimanding finger shaking slightly at KELLER.*] See ? We should never have planted that tree. I said so in the first place ; it was too soon to plant a tree for him.

CHRIS [*alarmed*]: Too soon !

MOTHER [*angering*]: We rushed into it. Everybody was in such a hurry to bury him. I *said* not to plant it yet. [*To KELLER*] I *told* you to—!

CHRIS: Mother, Mother ! [*She looks into his face.*] The wind blew it down. What significance has that got ? What are you talking about ? Mother, please . . . don't go through it all again, will you ? It's no good, it doesn't accomplish anything. I've been thinking, y'know ?—maybe we ought to put our minds to forgetting him ?

MOTHER: That's the third time you've said that this week.

CHRIS: Because it's not right ; we never took up our lives again. We're like at a railroad station waiting for a train that never comes in.

MOTHER [*pressing top of her head*]: Get me an aspirin, heh ?

CHRIS: Sure, and let's break out of this, heh, Mom ? I thought the four of us might go out to dinner a couple of nights, maybe go dancing out at the shore.

MOTHER: Fine. [*To KELLER.*] We can do it tonight.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Deutsche Rundschau. It was warmly received by Berlin literary circles. It has the advantage of its bloom of youthful lyricism over *Death in Venice*, to which it is most nearly related; and, in a purely artistic sense, it may be that its musical qualities were what most endeared it to its readers. Here perhaps for the first time I learned to use music to mould my style and form. Here for the first time I grasped the idea of epic prose composition as a thought-texture woven of different themes, as a musically related complex—and later, in *The Magic Mountain*, I made use of it on a larger scale. It has been said of the latter work that it is an example of “the novel as architecture of ideas”; if that be true, the tendency toward such a conception goes back to *Tonio Kröger*. In particular, the linguistic leit-motif was not handled, as in *Buddenbrooks*, purely on an external and naturalistic basis, but was transferred to the more lucent realm of ideas and emotions, and thus lifted from the mechanical into the musical sphere.

The astounding triumphal progress of my family novel could not fail to alter the circumstances of my life. No longer was I the entirely obscure young man of former days. What I had been

KELLER: Look, it's a nice day. What are we arguing for?

MOTHER [*warningly*]: Nobody in this house dast take her faith away, Joe. Strangers might. But not his father, not his brother.

KELLER [*exasperated*]: What do you want me to do? What do you want?

MOTHER: I want you to act like he's coming back. Both of you. Don't think I haven't noticed you since Chris invited her. I won't stand for any nonsense.

KELLER: But, Kate—

MOTHER: Because if he's not coming back, then I'll kill myself! Laugh. Laugh at me. [*She points to tree.*] But why did that happen the very night she came back? Laugh, but there are meanings in such things. [*She goes to sleep in his room and his memorial breaks in pieces.*] Look at it; look. [*She sits on bench.*] Joe—

KELLER: Calm yourself.

MOTHER: Believe with me, Joe. I can't stand all alone.

KELLER: Calm yourself.

MOTHER: Only last week a man turned up in Detroit, missing longer than Larry. You read it yourself.

KELLER: All right, all right, calm yourself.

MOTHER: You above all have got to believe, you—

KELLER [*rising*]: Why me above all?

MOTHER: Just don't stop believing.

KELLER: What does that mean, me above all?

[*BERT comes rushing on.*]

BERT: Mr Keller! Say, Mr Keller... [*Pointing up driveway.*] Tommy just said it again!

KELLER [*not remembering any of it*]: Said what? Who?

BERT: The dirty word.

KELLER: Oh. Well—

BERT: Gee, aren't you going to arrest him? I warned him.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Each of the five grown children (they were five as we were, the two youngest twins) had his own beautifully bound library, quite separate from the rich collections of art and music books owned by the head of the house, one of the first Wagnerians, personally acquainted with the master. Only by a sort of intelligent self-compulsion did he devote himself to mathematics (he lectured at the University) instead of wholly to music. The lady of the house came of a Berlin literary family, being the daughter of Ernst and Hedwig Dohm. My existence and my youthful performance were not lost upon her, nor did she oppose the passionate feeling that soon grew up in me for the only daughter of the house—a feeling which my solitary youth had not taught me any need to dissimulate. There was a ball in the gilded High Renaissance salons of the Pringsheim house, a brilliant and numerous gathering, where for the first time I was conscious of basking in the full sunshine of public favour and regard; it ripened in me the feelings upon which I hoped to base the happiness of my life.

Once before, many years earlier, I had been close to matrimony. In a pension in Florence I had made friends with two of my table mates, English sisters; the elder, who was dark, I found sympathetic, but the younger, who was blonde,

MOTHER [*to KELLER*]: Isn't she the most—? [*To ANN.*] It's gorgeous, simply gor—

CHRIS [*to MOTHER*]: No kidding, now, isn't she the prettiest gal you ever saw?

MOTHER [*caught short by his obvious admiration, she finds herself reaching out for the glass of water and aspirin in his hand, and—*]: You gained a little weight, didn't you, darling? [*She gulps pill and drinks.*]

ANN: It comes and goes.

KELLER: Look how nice her legs turned out!

ANN [*as she runs to fence*]: Boy, the poplars got thick, didn't they?

[*KELLER moves to settee and sits.*]

KELLER: Well, it's three years, Annie. We're gettin' old, kid.

MOTHER: How does Mom like New York? [*ANN keeps looking through trees.*]

ANN [*a little hurt*]: Why'd they take our hammock away?

KELLER: Oh, no, it broke. Couple of years ago.

MOTHER: What broke? He had one of his light lunches and flopped into it.

ANN [*laughs and turns back towards JIM's yard*]: Oh, excuse me!

[*JIM has come to fence and is looking over it. He is smoking a cigar. As she cries out, he comes on around on stage.*]

JIM: How do you do? [*To CHRIS.*] She looks very intelligent!

CHRIS: Ann, this is Jim—Doctor Bayliss.

ANN [*shaking JIM's hand*]: Oh, sure, he writes a lot about you.

JIM: Don't you believe it. He likes everybody. In the battalion he was known as Mother McKeller.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Mountain—for the number of *Die Neue Rundschau* which was dedicated to my fiftieth birthday.

The first fruit of my married state had been the novel *Royal Highness*, and it bears the marks of its origin. Here was an attempt to write a comedy in the form of a novel; it was likewise an attempt to come to terms, as a writer, with my own happiness. The result was generally criticized as being—after *Buddenbrooks*—too light. Certainly with justice. Yet both the imaginative intent and the scope of this fairy tale of real life did reach deeper than was generally perceived, and they were not quite without a groping and instinctive touch of prophecy. I am not speaking of the analysis of the dynastic idea—which could probably not have been made in so sympathetic a vein if I had not been dealing with an institution ripe for decay. But the “happiness” that was the theme of *Royal Highness* was not meant altogether banally and eudaemonistically. A problem was here resolved under the guise of comedy, but it was a problem nonetheless, one actually felt, not merely idle. In this novel a young married man explored, by means of a fable, the possibility of harmonizing the claims of society and the solitary, of synthesizing form and life, and of reconciling the melancholy consciousness of aristocracy to the new demands which even then might have

ANN: That's a funny thing to say ; how could I help remembering him?

MOTHER [*—it is drawing to a head the wrong way for her ; she starts anew. She rises and comes to ANN*]: Did you hang up your things?

ANN: Yeah . . . [*To CHRIS*]: Say, you've sure gone in for clothes. I could hardly find room in the closet.

MOTHER: No, don't you remember? That's Larry's room.

ANN: You mean . . . they're Larry's?

MOTHER: Didn't you recognize them?

ANN [*slowly rising, a little embarrassed*]: Well, it never occurred to me that you'd—I mean the shoes are all shined.

MOTHER: Yes, dear. [*Slight pause. ANN can't stop staring at her. Mother breaks it by speaking with the relish of gossip, putting her arm around ANN and walking with her.*] For so long I've been aching for a nice conversation with you, Annie. Tell me something.

ANN: What?

MOTHER: I don't know. Something nice.

CHRIS [*wryly*]: She means do you go out much?

MOTHER: Oh, shut up.

KELLER: And are any of them serious?

MOTHER [*laughing, sits in her chair*]: Why don't you both choke?

KELLER: Annie, you can't go into a restaurant with that woman any more. In five minutes thirty-nine strange people are sitting at the table telling her their life story

MOTHER: If I can't ask Annie a personal question—

KELLER: Askin' is all right, but don't beat her over the head. You're beatin' her, you're beatin' her. [*They are laughing.*]

literature, art, the manifestations of mind; and the crude unkindly time drove her into an unhappy bohemian existence. A taste for the macabre made her as a girl adorn her room with a death's head, to which she gave a scurrilous name; yet—the two things go very well together—she was as childishly laughter-loving as the rest of us. Later she kept poison by her—from what source we could only guess—and that too was probably a piece of playful fancy. I think, however, that the proud resolve was already present, not to suffer any degradation life might have in store for her. Without manifest talents of a literary or trainable kind, she seized passionately upon the theatre as a sphere of possible activity and self-realization. Not being what people call a “born actress,” she tried to compensate for the lack of the essential gift by an artificial accentuation of her person and her femininity, so that one soon got the disquieting impression that a problem was being taken hold of by the wrong end, and with fatal lack of understanding. Her career came to a standstill in the provinces. Disappointed in her professional aspirations, she remained the object of desire. Apparently she tried to find a way back into the bourgeois sphere, and her hopes centred about a marriage with the young son of an Alsatian industrialist who was in love with her.

ANN [*rises and swings around in back of CHRIS*]: So I've heard.

CHRIS: Mother, I'll bet you money that you're the only woman in the country who after three years is still—

MOTHER: You're sure?

CHRIS: Yes, I am.

MOTHER: Well, if you're sure then you're sure. [*She turns her head away an instant.*] They don't say it on the radio but I'm sure that in the dark at night they're still waiting for their sons.

CHRIS: Mother, you're absolutely—

MOTHER [*waving him off*]: Don't be so damned smart! Now stop it! [*Slight pause.*] There are just a few things you *don't* know. All of you. And I'll tell you one of them, Annie. Deep, deep in your heart you've always been waiting for him.

ANN [*resolutely*]: No, Kate.

MOTHER [*with increasing demand*]: But deep in your heart, Annie!

CHRIS: She ought to know, shouldn't she?

MOTHER: Don't let them tell you what to think. Listen to your heart. Only your heart.

ANN: Why does your heart tell you he's alive?

MOTHER: Because he has to be.

ANN: But why, Kate?

MOTHER [*going to her*]: Because certain things have to be, and certain things can never be. Like the sun has to rise, it has to be. That's why there's God. Otherwise anything could happen. But there's God, so certain things can never happen. I would know, Annie—just like I knew the day he [*indicates CHRIS*] went into that terrible battle. Did he write me? Was it in the papers? No, but that morning I couldn't raise my head off the

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

arms, to receive her moans upon my breast.

She never recovered from the blow thus dealt her ageing, weak, and anxious heart. In mine, sorrow for our lost one, pity for all she must have suffered, mingled with reproaches for this awful deed committed almost in her fragile mother's sight, and with outrage against the deed itself. Its self-sufficiency, the stern and shockingly final life-and-death actuality of it seemed somehow like a betrayal of our brother-and-sisterly bond, a bond of destiny which I—it is hard to put into words—had ultimately regarded as objectively superior to the realities of life, and which, in my view, my sister's act showed her to have forgotten. In truth there was no justice in my grievance. For had not I too grown vastly "actual" by dint of work and dignities, wife and child and home and all the serious and humanly pleasant things of this life whatever they are called? And if in my case actuality wore a blithe and benignant face, still it was made of the same stuff as my sister's deed and involved the same breach of faith. All actuality is deadly earnest; and it is morality itself that, one with life, forbids us to be true to the guileless unrealism of our youth.

That was in 1910. My mother, her spirit more and more broken, survived her younger daughter for twelve years. Her last days fell in the period

barrassed.] See you later, Ann, you look wonderful.
[*He exits. They look at ANN.*]

ANN [*to CHRIS, as she sits slowly on stool*]: Haven't they stopped talking about Dad?

CHRIS [*comes down and sits on arm of chair*]: Nobody talks about him any more.

KELLER [*rises and comes to her*]: Gone and forgotten, kid.

ANN: Tell me. Because I don't want to meet anybody on the block if they're going to—

CHRIS: I don't want you to worry about it.

ANN [*to KELLER*]: Do they still remember the case, Joe? Do they talk about you?

KELLER: The only one still talks about it is my wife.

MOTHER: That's because you keep on playing policemen with the kids. All their parents hear out of you is jail, jail, jail.

KELLER: Actually what happened was that when I got home from the penitentiary the kids got very interested in me. You know kids. I was [*laughs*] like the expert on the jail situation. And as time passed they got it confused and . . . I ended up a detective. [*Laughs.*]

MOTHER: Except that *they* didn't get it confused. [*To ANN.*] He hands out police badges from the Post Toasties boxes. [*They laugh.*]

[ANN rises and comes to KELLER, putting her arm around his shoulder.]

ANN [*wondrously at them, happy*]: Gosh. it's wonderful to hear you laughing about it.

CHRIS: Why, what'd you expect?

ANN: The last thing I remember on this block was one word—'Murderers!' Remember that, Kate?—Mrs Hammond standing in front of our house and yelling that word? She's still around, I suppose?

to the theme of art-and-the-artist, to the psychology of the unreal, the illusionary form of existence. But what intrigued me stylistically was the directness of the autobiographical form, which I had never before tried, and which my rough-hewn model laid to my hand. At the same time, a peculiar intellectual attraction emanated from the burlesque idea of taking a much-loved tradition—self-portraiture in the Goethe manner, the introspective confessions of the born aristocrat—and transferring it to the criminal sphere. The idea has really great comic possibilities; and I so enjoyed writing the first chapters—this torso was later published by the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt—that I was not surprised to hear from people well qualified to judge that the fragment as it stands is the happiest and best thing I have done. In a way it may be the most personal, representing as it does my attitude toward tradition, which is at once kindly and destructive, and which determines my “mission” as a writer. The inner laws that later produced *The Magic Mountain*—that epic of a cultural development—were of the same nature.

It proved to be hard to sustain the right tone for the Krull memoirs over any great length of time;

MOTHER [*pained*]: How could they move back?

KELLER: It ain't gonna end *till* they move back. [*To*

ANN.] Till people play cards with him again, and talk with him, and smile with him—you play cards with a man you know he can't be a murderer. And the next time you write him I like you to tell him just what I said. [*ANN simply stares at him.*] You hear me?

ANN [*surprised*]: Don't you hold anything against him?

KELLER: Annie, I never believed in crucifying people.

ANN [*mystified*]: But he was your partner, he dragged you through the mud. *how can you do that*

KELLER: Well, he ain't my sweetheart, but you gotta forgive, don't you?

ANN: You, either, Kate? Don't you feel any—?

KELLER [*to ANN*]: The next time you write Dad—

ANN: I don't write him.

KELLER [*struck*]: Well, every now and then you—

ANN [*a little shamed, but determined*]: No, I've never written to him. Neither has my brother. [*To CHRIS.*]

Say, do you feel this way, too?

CHRIS: He murdered twenty-one pilots.

KELLER: What the hell kinda talk is that?

MOTHER: That's not a thing to say about a man.

ANN: What else can you say? When they took him away I followed him, went to him every visiting day. I was crying all the time. Until the news came about Larry. Then I realized. It's wrong to pity a man like that. Father or no father, there's only one way to look at him. He knowingly shipped out parts that would crash an airplane. And how do you know Larry wasn't one of them?

MOTHER: I was waiting for that. [*Going to her.*] As long as you're here, Annie, I want to ask you never to say that again.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

the sole and painful way we have of getting the particular experience—no wonder, then, that the process is attended by surprises ! Here—I borrow the figure from crystallography, since it is so apt—many elements shot together to produce an image which, playing in the light of its many facets, floating in the aura of its manifold associations, might well cause the eye of one watching and conspiring at its development to lose itself in a dream. I love that word *associations*. For me, and in however relative a sense, that which is full of associations is, quite precisely, that which is significant. How well I remember my feeling of grateful acknowledgement when Ernst Bertram read aloud to us from the manuscript the profound Venetian chapter of his Nietzsche mythology and I heard him utter the name of my little tale !

As inwardly, so outwardly, all the elements of the fable fell into the picture in the most singular way. I was reminded of my experience with *Tonio Kröger* by the inherent symbolism and rightness for composition of even the most unimportant of the factual elements. In that tale of my youth one might suppose that the scenes in the library or with the police officer were invented to make my point. They were not; they are quite simply taken from the facts. In the same way,

that's the business. A fine, hairline crack. All right, so—so he's a little man, your father, always scared of loud voices. What'll the Major say?—Half a day's production shot. . . . What'll I say? You know what I mean? Human. [*He pauses.*] So he takes out his tools and he—covers over the cracks. All right—that's bad, it's wrong, but that's what a little man does. If I could have gone in that day I'd-a told him—junk'em, Steve, we can afford it. But alone he was afraid. But I know he meant no harm. He believed they'd hold up a hundred per cent. That's a mistake, but it ain't murder. You musn't feel that way about him. You understand me? It ain't right. ➤

ANN [*she regards him a moment*]: Joe, let's forget it.

KELLER: Annie, the day the news came about Larry he was in the next cell to mine—Dad. And he cried, Annie—he cried half the night.

ANN [*touched*]: He shoulda cried all night. [*Slight pause.*]

KELLER [*almost angered*]: Annie, I do not understand why you—?

CHRIS [*breaking in—with nervous urgency*]: Are you going to stop it?

ANN: Don't yell at him. He just wants everybody happy.

KELLER [*clasps her around waist, smiling*]: That's my sentiments. Can you stand steak?

CHRIS: And champagne!

KELLER: Now you're operatin'! I'll call Swanson's for a table! Big time tonight, Annie!

ANN: Can't scare me.

KELLER [*to CHRIS, pointing at ANN*]: I like that girl. Wrap her up. [*They laugh. Goes up porch.*] You got nice legs, Annie! . . . I want to see everybody drunk tonight. [*Pointing to CHRIS.*] Look at him, he's blushin'! [*He exits, laughing, into house.*]

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Edmond Jaloux wrote a spirited foreword to the translation.

In 1912 my wife had been attacked by a catarrh of the tip of the lung. Then, and again in the next year but one, she was obliged to stay for several months in the Swiss Alps. In May and June of 1912 I spent three weeks with her in Davos, and accumulated—the word but ill describes the extreme passivity of my state—the fantastic impressions out of which the Hörselberg idea shaped itself into a short tale. I distinctly thought of it as another brief interlude to the *Confessions*, which were still luring me on, and as a satyr play to the tragic novella of decay just finished. The fascination of death, the triumph of extreme disorder over a life founded upon order and consecrated to it—these were to be reduced in scale and dignity by a humorous treatment. A simple-minded hero, a droll conflict between macabre adventure and bourgeois sense of duty—the outcome was not decided but would surely be found, and the whole be easy and amusing and not take much space. When I came back to Tölz and Munich I began to write the first chapter of *The Magic Mountain*, and even read

want you to be ready for me. I don't want to win you away from anything.

ANN [*putting her arms around him*]: Oh, Chris, I've been ready a long long time!

CHRIS: Then he's gone for ever. You're sure.

ANN: I almost got married two years ago.

CHRIS: Why didn't you?

ANN: You started to write to me—[*Slight pause.*]

CHRIS: You felt something that far back?

ANN: Every day since!

CHRIS: Ann, why didn't you let me know?

ANN: I was waiting for you, Chris. Till then you never wrote. And when you did, what did you say? You sure

can be ambiguous, you know.

CHRIS: [*looks towards house, then at her, trembling*]:

Give me a kiss, Ann. Give me a—[*They kiss.*] God, I

kissed you, Annie. I kissed Annie. How long, how long

I've been waiting to kiss you!

ANN: I'll never forgive you. Why did you wait all these

years? All I've done is sit and wonder if I was crazy for

thinking of you.

CHRIS: Annie, we're going to live now! I'm going to make

you so happy. [*He kisses her, but without their bodies*

touching.]

ANN [*a little embarrassed*]: Not like that, you're not.

CHRIS: I kissed you.

ANN: Like Larry's brother. Do it like you, Chris. [*He*

breaks away from her abruptly.] What is it, Chris?

CHRIS: Let's drive some place... I want to be alone

with you.

ANN: No... what is it, Chris, your mother?

CHRIS: No—nothing like that.

ANN: Then what's wrong? Even in your letters, there was

something ashamed.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Reflections of a Non-Political Man; by dint of which the worst of the introspective burden was lifted from the novel—or rather they helped to ripen it for composition. But the problems dealt with in the narrative, like those in the volume of confession and struggle, were all present and alive in me before the war; everything was there before the war—it was only actualized, and bathed in the lurid and desolate light of the conflagration.

The nerve-racking days before the mobilization, the outbreak of the international catastrophe, we spent in our retreat in Tölz. But we got an idea of how things stood in the country and in the world when we drove into town to take leave of my youngest brother, who was in the artillery reserve and left at once for the front. We saw the hot August hurly-burly of the railroad stations, choked with a host of distracted humanity shaken and torn by anguish and enthusiasm. The fatality took its course. I shared to the full the pangs of intellectual Germany in the clutch of destiny; which had faith in so much that was true and so much that was false, so much that was right and so much that was wrong, and which

the bank-book, to drive the new car, to see the new refrigerator. I mean you can take those things out of a war, but when you drive that car you've got to know that it came out of the love a man can have for a man, you've got to be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is really loot, and there's blood on it. I didn't want to take any of it. And I guess that included you.

exploiting the P.

ANN: And you still feel that way?

CHRIS: I want you now, Annie.

ANN: Because you mustn't feel that way any more. Because you have a right to whatever you have. Everything, Chris, understand that? To me, too. . . And the money, there's nothing wrong in your money. Your father put hundreds of planes in the air, you should be proud. A man should be paid for that. . .

CHRIS: Oh Annie, Annie . . . I'm going to make a fortune for you!

KELLER [*offstage*]: Hello . . . Yes. Sure.

ANN [*laughing softly*]: What'll I do with a fortune?

[*They kiss. KELLER enters from house.*]

KELLER [*thumbing towards house*]: Hey, Ann, your brother—[*They step apart shyly; KELLER comes down, and wryly.*] What is this, Labor Day? *Labor Day*.

CHRIS [*waving him away, knowing the kidding will be endless*]: All right, all right.

ANN: You shouldn't burst out like that.

KELLER: Well, nobody told me it was Labor Day.

[*Looks around.*] Where's the hot dogs?

CHRIS [*loving it*]: All right. You said it once.

KELLER: Well, as long as I know it's Labor Day from now on, I'll wear a bell around my neck.

ANN [*affectionately*]: He's so subtle!

CHRIS: George Bernard Shaw as an elephant.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

by his officers, all dapper and affable people, and one and all, for what service I know not, decorated with the Iron Cross First Class. One of them—he had been a chamberlain at a Thuringian court—later addressed me in a letter as Herr Comrade-in-Arms; and really the vicissitudes of the war hit me as hard as they did these people.

In January 1914, while my wife was still at Arosa, I had moved with the children into the home we had built for ourselves in the Bogenhausen quarter on the Isar. And here we lived through the years of horror and wretchedness; we saw the ruin and the catastrophe, the failure of an undoubtedly genuine if politically ill-advised and historically false uprising; we felt the revolting and unnerving sense of being delivered over to foreigners and had the disorders of domestic dissolution break upon us.

The feeling had been strong in me from the beginning that here was the epochal turning-point of an age, whose profound meaning for me personally could not be denied. This was the basis of that intoxication with fate which gave my attitude toward the war its positively German character. To pursue the tasks I had in hand was not to be thought of—or, rather, after repeated trials, proved mentally impossible. Out of a stock of material that had been accumulating for years

is his daughter. I mean if she was sent here to find out something?

CHRIS [*angered*]: Why? What is there to find out?

ANN [*on phone, offstage*]: Why are you so excited, George? What happened there?

KELLER: I mean if they want to open up the case again, for the nuisance value, to hurt us?

CHRIS: Dad ... how could you think that of her?

ANN [*still on phone*]: But what did he say to you, } *Together*
for God's sake?

KELLER: It couldn't be, heh. You know.

CHRIS: Dad, you amaze me....

KELLER [*breaking in*]: All right, forget it, forget it. [*With great force, moving about.*] I want a clean start for you, Chris. I want a new sign over the plant—Christopher Keller, Incorporated.

CHRIS [*a little uneasily*]: J. O. Keller is good enough.

KELLER: We'll talk about it. I'm going to build you a house, stone, with a driveway from the road. I want you to spread out, Chris, I want you to use what I made for you. [*He is close to him now.*] I mean, with joy, Chris, without shame ... with joy.

CHRIS [*touched*]: I will, Dad.

KELLER [*with deep emotion*]: Say it to me.

CHRIS: Why?

KELLER: Because sometimes I think you're ... ashamed of the money.

CHRIS: No, don't feel that.

KELLER: Because it's good money, there's nothing wrong with that money.

CHRIS [*a little frightened*]: Dad, you don't have to tell me this.

KELLER [*—with overriding affection and self-confidence now. He grips CHRIS by the back of the neck, and with*

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

definition. The problem of the German nation there treated was beyond a doubt my own—therein lay the national character of the book, which through all the torment, all the polemical perversity proved at last its *raison d'être* as an educational document. "*Que diable allait-il faire, dans cette galère?*" That was its fitting motto, as also the line of *Tasso* that headed it: "*Vergleiche dich, erkenne was du bist!*" I should have added a third, if I had found it sooner: "No one remains precisely what he is, when he knows himself."

The *Reflections* appeared in 1918, at what, to outward appearance, was the most unfavourable, indeed, the most impossible of moments: the time of the collapse and the revolution. But in reality it was the right moment. The tasks, the intellectual necessities which the German *bourgeoisie* had now to face, I had gone through earlier, and had spoken out; many found it helpful—in fact, I like to think that the book has its meaning and value for the history of culture; not only the value of steadfastness but in its character as the last great retreat action, fought not without gallantry, of a romantic *bourgeoisie* in face of the triumphant "new."

An animal story, called *A Man and His Dog*, which, thanks to a capital translation, was particularly well received in England, and a some-

KELLER: What for?

MOTHER: I don't know. [*She speaks with warning.*] He's a lawyer now, Joe. George is a lawyer. All these years he never even sent a postcard to Steve. Since he got back from the war, not a postcard.

KELLER: So what?

MOTHER [*her tension breaking out*]: Suddenly he takes an airplane from New York to see him. An airplane!

KELLER: Well? So?

MOTHER [*trembling*]: Why?

KELLER: I don't read minds. Do you?

MOTHER: Why, Joe? What has Steve suddenly got to tell him that he takes an airplane to see him?

KELLER: What do I care what Steve's got to tell him?

MOTHER: You're sure, Joe?

KELLER [*frightened, but angry*]: Yes, I'm sure.

MOTHER [*sits stiffly in a chair*]: Be smart now, Joe. The boy is coming. Be smart.

KELLER [*desperately*]: Once and for all, did you hear what I said? I said I'm sure!

MOTHER [*nods weakly*]: All right, Joe. [*He straightens up.*] Just . . . be smart.

[KELLER, in hopeless fury, looks at her, turns around, goes up to porch and into house, slamming screen door violently behind him. MOTHER sits in chair downstage, stiffly, staring, seeing.]

CURTAIN

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

exhibit a high degree of critical creativeness for language itself is a criticism of life: it names, it defines, it hits the mark, it passes judgment, and all by making things alive." And yet, shall I confess that I regularly find mere "writing," as distinct from the free composition of the creative author, a sort of passionate truancy and a self-tormenting theft from happier tasks? There is much sense of duty, a smack of the categorical imperative in play here, and one might comment on the paradox of asceticism with a bad conscience, if it were not that a good deal of pleasure and satisfaction are bound up with it—as is the case with all asceticism. In any case, my essay-writing proclivities seem fated to accompany and act as critique upon my creative work. *Buddenbrooks* is my only considerable work which was not interrupted by essay-writing; but one followed upon it: *Bilse und ich*, an argumentation in the form of an enquiry into the relation between the writer and reality. This from 1906; in 1910 there appeared two considerable essays: one, *Versuch über das Theater*, to the theme of which I returned at the Heidelberg Festival, and *The Old Fontane*, which I like the best of all my digressions in this kind. Indeed, after the war, in a time tortured by problems, a time when it was hard to collect one's thoughts, there was no lack of demands upon

CHRIS: George is just a damn fool, Mother, How can you take him seriously?

MOTHER: That family hates us. Maybe even Annie—

CHRIS: Oh, now, Mother. . . .

MOTHER: You think just because you like everybody, they like you!

CHRIS: All right, stop working yourself up. Just leave everything to me.

MOTHER: When George goes home tell her to go with him.

CHRIS [*non-committally*]: Don't worry about Annie.

MOTHER: Steve is her father, too.

CHRIS: Are you going to cut it out? Now, come.

MOTHER [*going upstage with him*]: You don't realize how people can hate, [Chris, they can hate so much they'll tear the world to pieces]

[ANN, *dressed up*, appears on porch.]

CHRIS: Look! She's dressed already. [*As he and MOTHER mount porch.*] I've just got to put on a shirt.

ANN [*in a preoccupied way*]: Are you feeling well, Kate?

MOTHER: What's the difference, dear. There are certain people, y'know, the sicker they get the longer they live. [*She goes into house.*]

CHRIS: You look nice.

ANN: We're going to tell her tonight.

CHRIS: Absolutely, don't worry about it.

ANN: I wish we could tell her now. I can't stand scheming. My stomach gets hard.

CHRIS: It's not scheming, we'll just get her in a better mood.

MOTHER [*offstage, in the house*]: Joe, are you going to sleep all day!

ANN [*laughing*]: The only one who's relaxed is your father. He's fast asleep.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

filled with a warmly disposed and international audience. I sat in a box near the stage, and my own lively interest astonished me. The historical situation came to the aid of my youthful production, of whose weaknesses and double nature I was at all times only too conscious, and helped to make it effective even in the eyes of the author himself. The decline of an aesthetic epoch and the rise of a society of suffering, the triumph of the religious over the cultural—there was a general receptivity for such themes, and the evening was memorable in that it gave me food for thought upon the existence of a sensitiveness—not of any very agitating kind, of course, something that would only register itself, so to speak, on a seismograph—that seemed to me a form of political experience—only different, more subdued and indirect.

Meanwhile the enemy and neutral frontiers had opened; amid the smoke wreaths of the late conflagration a new Europe began to appear: reduced, as it were, in size, condensed, more intimate. Foreign lecture tours began, first to Holland, Switzerland, and Denmark, in the capital of which latter country I was the guest of

SUE: That depends on your shape, of course. I don't see why you should have had a problem.

ANN: I've had chances—

SUE: I'll bet. It's romantic . . . it's very unusual to me, marrying the brother of your sweetheart.

ANN: I don't know. I think it's mostly that whenever I need somebody to tell me the truth I've always thought of Chris. When he tells you something you know it's so. He relaxes me.

SUE: And he's got money. That's important, you know.

ANN: It wouldn't matter to me.

SUE: You'd be surprised. It makes all the difference. I married an intern. On my salary. And that was bad, because as soon as a woman supports a man he owes her something. You can never owe somebody without resenting them. [ANN *laughs*.] That's true, you know.

ANN: Underneath, I think the doctor is very devoted.

SUE: Oh, certainly. But it's bad when a man always sees the bars in front of him. Jim thinks he's in jail all the time.

ANN: Oh. . .

SUE: That's why I've been intending to ask you a small favor, Ann. It's something very important to me.

ANN: Certainly, I can do it.

SUE: You can. When you take up housekeeping, try to find a place away from here.

ANN: Are you fooling?

SUE: I'm very serious. My husband is unhappy with Chris around.

ANN: How is that?

SUE: Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see?

ANN: Well, isn't that good?

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

gettable gesture of high-hearted hospitality and readiness to be friendly. I say *society* advisedly; for not only the closed circle of the PEN Club—which for the space of a week exhausted itself in attentions—but also nobility and officialdom united to give me the impression that there prevailed a sincere respect and gratitude for German culture, which seized upon this occasion to assert itself against political difficulties and antinomies.

It was in 1924, after endless intermissions and difficulties, that there finally appeared the book which, all in all, had had me in its power not seven but twelve years. Its reception would have needed to be much more unfavourable than it was, to surpass my expectations.

It is my way, when I have finished a book, to let it fall with a resigned shrug and not the faintest confidence in its chances in the world. The attraction it exerted upon me, its sponsor, has long since vanished; that I have finished it at all is a feat due to my convictions on the ethics of craftsmanship—due indeed, at bottom, to obstinacy. Altogether, obstinacy seems to me to have played such a part in these crabbed years-long preoccupations, I regard them so much as a

SUE: Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail.

ANN: That's not true!

SUE: Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. There's not a person on the block who doesn't know the truth.

ANN: That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and—

SUE: So, what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got nothing against Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair-shirt let him take off his broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy with that phoney idealism of his, and I'm at the end of my rope on it! [CHRIS enters on porch, wearing shirt and tie now. She turns quickly, hearing. With a smile.] Hello, darling. How's Mother?

CHRIS: I thought George came.

SUE: No, it was just us.

CHRIS [coming down to them]: Susie, do me a favor, eh? Go up to Mother and see if you can calm her. She's all worked up.

SUE: She still doesn't know about you two?

CHRIS [laughs a little]: Well, she senses it, I guess. You know my mother.

SUE [going up to porch]: Oh, yeah, she's psychic.

CHRIS: Maybe there's something in the medicine chest.

SUE: I'll give her one of everything. [On porch.] Don't worry about Kate; couple of drinks, dance her around a little. . . She'll love Ann. [To ANN.] Because you're the female version of him. [CHRIS laughs.] Don't be alarmed, I said version. [She goes into house.]

CHRIS: Interesting woman, isn't she?

ANN: Yeah, she's very interesting.

CHRIS: She's a great nurse, you know, she—

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

ward with his bold production. The subject matter of *The Magic Mountain* was not by its nature suitable for the masses. But with the bulk of the educated classes these were burning questions, and the national crisis had produced in the general public precisely that alchemical "keying-up" of which the actual adventure of little Hans Castorp had consisted. Yes, certainly the German reader recognized himself in the simple-minded but shrewd young hero of the novel. He could and would be guided by him.

I do not deceive myself as to the nature of this curious success. It was less epic than that of my youthful novel, more conditioned by the times, but not for that reason shallower or more ephemeral, for it rested upon a community of suffering. Success came more quickly than in the case of *Buddenbrooks*: the first newspaper notices sounded the alarm, the obstacle of the price was taken by assault, and it required only four years to bring the book to the hundredth printing. A Hungarian translation came out almost simultaneously with the original, the Dutch, English, and Swedish followed, and now, contrary to all the traditions of the Paris book trade, a French edition in two volumes, unabridged, is arranged for, and I have the happiest auguries of its reception in a moved and moving letter from

CHRIS: He's welcome here. You've got nothing to fear from George.

ANN: Tell me that . . . just tell me that.

CHRIS: The man is innocent, Ann. Remember he was falsely accused once and it put him through hell. How would you behave if you were faced with the same thing again? Annie, believe me, there's nothing wrong for you here, believe me, kid.

ANN: All right, Chris, all right. [*They embrace as KELLER appears quietly on porch. ANN simply studies him.*]

KELLER: Every time I come out here it looks like Play-land! [*They break and laugh in embarrassment.*]

CHRIS: I thought you were going to shave?

KELLER [*sitting on bench*]: In a minute. I just woke up, I can't see nothin'.

ANN: You look shaved.

KELLER: Oh, no. [*Massages his jaw.*] Gotta be extra special tonight. Big night, Annie. So how's it feel to be a married woman?

ANN [*laughs*]: I don't know, yet.

KELLER [*to CHRIS*]: What's the matter, you slippin'? [*He takes a little box of apples from under the bench as they talk.*]

CHRIS: The great roué!

KELLER: What is that, roué?

CHRIS: It's French.

KELLER: Don't talk dirty. [*They laugh.*]

CHRIS [*to ANN*]: You ever meet a bigger ignoramus?

KELLER: Well, somebody's got to make a living.

ANN [*as they laugh*]: That's telling him.

KELLER: I don't know, everybody's gettin' so goddam educated in this country there'll be nobody to take away

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

of Education, Dr. Becker, founded the literary section of the Berlin Academy of the Arts and Letters, and I was appointed to the little group of electors. There was a full-dress meeting of the whole Academy, under the presidency of Liebermann—which got itself much talked about on account of Arno Holz's not very apropos hostility. I was chosen in the name of the section to thank the Minister for his speech of introduction and welcome; and I did not let slip the opportunity to refer to that antagonism to academic thought which exists in the German intellectual sphere, and to indicate the possibility of obviating it. I took the occasion to put the case of "the other side"—from the viewpoint of society as a whole; and this I did in the sincere conviction that here were the fitting time and place to carry out my resolve and speak. The official recognition of literature as an organ of the national life, its correlation, not to say its "elevation," into the official, was a logical consequence of Germany's social and national development, and no more than the confirmation of existing facts. It was not chance that I had been asked to speak; as perhaps no other, I had suffered in my own person, with whatever violent struggles, the compulsion of the times, which forced us out of the metaphysical and individual stage into the social; I too knew

a free man. Who is he going to come to, Annie? His baby. You. He'll come, old, mad, into your house.

ANN: That can't matter anymore, Joe.

KELLER: I don't want that to come between us. [*Gestures between CHRIS and himself.*]

ANN: I can only tell you that that could never happen.

KELLER: You're in love now, Annie, but believe me, I'm older than you and I know—a daughter is a daughter, and a father is a father. And it could happen. [*He pauses.*] I like you and George to go to him in prison and tell him . . . 'Dad, Joe wants to bring you into the business when you get out.'

ANN [*surprised, even shocked*]: You'd have him as a partner?

KELLER: No, no partner. A good job. [*Pause. He sees she is shocked, a little mystified. He gets up, speaks more nervously.*] I want him to know, Annie . . . while he's sitting there I want him to know that when he gets out he's got a place waitin' for him. It'll take his bitterness away. To know you got a place . . . it sweetens you.

ANN: Joe, you owe him nothing.

KELLER: I owe 'him a good kick in the teeth, but he's your father.

CHRIS: Then kick him in the teeth! I don't want him in the plant, so that's that! You understand? And besides, don't talk about him like that. People misunderstand you!

KELLER: And I don't understand why she has to crucify the man.

CHRIS: Well, it's her father, if she feels—

KELLER: No, no.

CHRIS [*almost angrily*]: What's it to you? Why—?

KELLER [*—a commanding outburst in high nervousness*]: A father is a father! [*As though the outburst had revealed*

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

feels inclined to put in the detail." I did not know then how much the phrase, out of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, was to mean to me as a motto in the years of work before me. But the evening hour was full of meditation, of tentative, groping speculation and the forecast of an entirely new thing; I felt an indescribable fascination of the mind and the senses at this idea of leaving the modern bourgeois sphere so far behind and making my narrative pierce deep, deep into the human. The tendencies of the time, the tastes of my own age united to make the theme alluring to me. The problem of man, thanks to the advance of his experimentations upon himself, has attained a peculiar actuality: the search for his essence, his origin, his goal, evokes everywhere a new humane interest and sympathy—I am using the word *humane* in its most scientific, objective sense, without any sentimental bearing. We have pushed forward our knowledge, whether into the darkness of prehistoric times or into the night of the unconscious; researches that at a certain point meet and fall together have mightily broadened the scope of our anthropological knowledge, back into the depths of time, or—what is really the same thing—down into the depths of the soul; and in all of us there is awake a lively curiosity about what is earliest and oldest in human things,

JIM: Where's your mother?

CHRIS: Upstairs, dressing.

ANN [*crossing to them rapidly*]: What happened to George?

JIM: I asked him to wait in the car. Listen to me now. Can you take some advice? [*They wait.*] Don't bring him in here.

ANN: Why?

JIM: Kate is in bad shape, you can't explode this in front of her.

ANN: Explode what?

JIM: You know why he's here, don't try to kid it away. There's blood in his eye; drive him somewhere and talk to him alone.

[ANN turns to go up drive, takes a couple of steps, sees KELLER, and stops. He goes quietly on into house.]

CHRIS [*shaken, and therefore angered*]: Don't be an old lady.

JIM: He's come to take her home. What does that mean? [*To ANN.*] You know what that means. Fight it out with him some place else.

ANN [*comes back down towards CHRIS*]: I'll drive . . . him somewhere.

CHRIS [*goes to her*]: No.

JIM: Will you stop being an idiot?

CHRIS: Nobody's afraid of him here. Cut that out!

[*He starts for driveway, but is brought up short by GEORGE, who enters there. GEORGE is CHRIS's age, but a paler man, now on the edge of his self-restraint. He speaks quietly, as though afraid to find himself screaming. An instant's hesitation and CHRIS steps up to him, hand extended, smiling.*]

CHRIS: Helluva way to do; what're you sitting out there for?

GEORGE: Doctor said your mother isn't well, I —

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

The material belonged to an ancient, primeval realm of civilization and fancy; it was a favourite subject of all the arts, hundreds of times elaborated in the East and the West in picture and poesy. My work, for good or ill, would take its historic place in the line, in the tradition, bearing the stamp of its own time and place. The most important, the decisive thing is legitimacy. These dreams had their roots far back in my childhood. When I began to substantiate them upon archaeological and Oriental study I was only going back to a reading beloved in youth and an early passion for the land of the pyramids—childish conquests which had once in the fifth form made me confuse a teacher who had asked me the name of the sacred bull of the Egyptians and was answered with the original instead of the Graecized form of the name.

What I had in mind, of course, was a novella which should serve as one wing to a historical triptych, the other two dealing with Spanish and German subjects, the religious-historical theme running through the whole. The old story! Hardly had I begun to write—after long hesitation, long walking round and round the uncommonly hot porridge—when I found that I could no longer conceal even from myself the specious claims to independence which the nar-

GEORGE [*keeps moving*]: It takes me a minute. [*Looking around.*] It seems impossible.

CHRIS: What?

GEORGE: I'm back here.

CHRIS: Say, you've gotten a little nervous, haven't you?

GEORGE: Yeah, towards end of the day. What're you, big executive now?

CHRIS: Just kind of medium. How's the law?

GEORGE: I don't know. When I was studying in the hospital it seemed sensible, but outside there doesn't seem to be much of a law. The trees got thick, didn't they? [*Points to stump.*] What's that?

CHRIS: Blew down last night. We had it there for Larry. You know.

GEORGE: Why, afraid you'll forget him?

CHRIS [*starts for GEORGE*]: Kind of a remark is that?

ANN [*breaking in, putting a restraining hand on CHRIS*]: When did you start wearing a hat?

GEORGE [*discovers hat in his hand*]: Today. From now on I decided to look like a lawyer, anyway. [*He holds it up to her.*] Don't you recognize it?

ANN: Why? Where—?

GEORGE: Your father's— He asked me to wear it.

ANN: How is he?

GEORGE: He got smaller.

ANN: Smaller?

GEORGE: Yeah, little. [*Holds out his hand to measure.*]

He's a little man. That's what happens to suckers, you know. It's good I went to him in time—another year there'd be nothing left but his smell.

CHRIS: What's the matter, George, what's the trouble?

GEORGE: The trouble? The trouble is when you make suckers out of people once, you shouldn't try to do it twice.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

achieving the *new*; no praise do I value higher than André Gide's when he wrote about *The Magic Mountain*: "*Cette œuvre considérable n'est vraiment comparable à rien.*"

The weeks of loving preoccupation with Kleist's comedy and the wonder of his metaphysical brilliance I will not call a waste of time, as all sorts of subterranean associations connected this critical task with my "main business"; and love is never uneconomical. But yet it pleases me that among the impromptu occupations to which the long narrative had to give way, there is one independent tale, *Mario and the Magician*—and seldom, I suppose, has any organic thing owed its origin to a more mechanical set of circumstances.

As a family unanimously bent on letting no summer pass without a stay at the seashore, my wife and I, with the youngest children, spent August 1929 in Samland, at the Baltic seaside resort of Rauschen, a choice conditioned by appeals from East Prussia and particularly an oft-renewed invitation from the Königsberg Goethe Society. It was not feasible to take the swollen bulk of my uncopied manuscript of *Joseph* upon this extended though easy trip. But I have no talent for unoccupied recreation, it is always sure to do me more harm than good; so

at Christmas. I didn't see him once since I got home from the war! Annie, you don't know what was done to that man. You don't know what happened.

ANN [*afraid*]: Of course I know.

GEORGE: You can't know, you wouldn't be here. Dad came to work that day. The night foreman came to him and showed him the cylinder heads . . . they were coming out of the process with defects. There was something wrong with the process. So Dad went directly to the phone and called here and told Joe to come down right away. But the morning passed. No sign of Joe. So Dad called again. By this time he had over a hundred defectives. The Army was screaming for stuff and Dad didn't have anything to ship. So Joe told him . . . on the phone he told him to weld, cover up the cracks in any way he could, and ship them out.

CHRIS: Are you through now?

GEORGE [*surging up at him*]: I'm not through now! [*Back to ANN.*] Dad was afraid. He wanted Joe there if he was going to do it. But Joe can't come down . . . He's sick. Sick! He suddenly gets the flu! Suddenly! But he promised to take responsibility. Do you understand what I'm saying? On the telephone you can't have responsibility! In a court you can always deny a phone call and that's exactly what he did. They knew he was a liar the first time, but in the appeal they believed that rotten lie and now Joe is a big shot and your father is the patsy. [*He gets up.*] Now what're you going to do? Eat his food, sleep in his bed? Answer me; what're you going to do?

CHRIS: What're you going to do, George?

GEORGE: He's too smart for me, I can't prove a phone call.

CHRIS: Then how dare you come in here with that rot?

ANN: George, the court—

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Our holidays had a practical over and above the literary result. We visited the Kurische Nehrung, whose landscape had often been recommended to us—it can boast that no less a person than Wilhelm von Humboldt has sung its praises—and spent a few days in the fishing village of Nidden in Lithuanian Memelland. We were so thrilled by the indescribable and unique beauty of nature in this place—the fantastic world of sandy dunes mile on mile, the birch and pine groves full of elk between The Haff and the Baltic, the wild splendour of the beach—that we decided to acquire a dwelling-place in this remote spot, a pendant, as it were, to our South German home. We took the first steps, leased a strip of dune with a view of idyllic beauty and grandeur from the Lithuanian Forest Administration, and commissioned a firm of Memel architects. The little house has already had its thatch put on. Each year we shall spend in it the summer holidays of our school children.

The year was not to close without agitating events. The famous award of the Swedish Academy, which once more, after a space of

CHRIS: On his own. And because he's a frightened mouse this is another thing he'd do—throw the blame on somebody else because he's not man enough to take it himself. He tried it in court but it didn't work, but with a fool like you it works!

GEORGE: Oh, Chris, you're a liar to yourself!

ANN [*deeply shaken*]: Don't talk like that!

CHRIS [*sits facing GEORGE*]: Tell me, George. What happened? The court record was good enough for you all these years, why isn't it good now? Why did you believe it all these years?

GEORGE [*after a slight pause*]: Because you believed it . . . That's the truth, Chris. I believed everything, because I thought you did. But today I heard it from his mouth. From his mouth it's altogether different than the record. Anyone who knows him, and knows your father, will believe it from his mouth. Your Dad took everything we have. I can't beat that. But she's one item he's not going to grab. [*He turns to ANN.*] Get your things. Everything they have is covered with blood. You're not the kind of a girl who can live with that. Get your things.

CHRIS: Ann . . . you're not going to believe that, are you?

ANN [*goes to him*]: You know it's not true, don't you?

GEORGE: How can he tell you? It's his father. [*To*

CHRIS] None of these things ever even cross your mind?

CHRIS: Yes, they crossed my mind. Anything can cross your mind!

GEORGE: *He knows*, Annie! He knows!

CHRIS: The voice of God!

GEORGE: Then why isn't your name on the business? Explain that to her!

CHRIS: What the hell has that got to do with—?

GEORGE: Annie, why isn't his name on it?

CHRIS: Even when I don't own it!

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

And I have to smile as I remember how consciously I laboured to bring out the atmospheric similarity of my own and the Scandinavian scene, in order to approximate my work to that of my literary ideals. Even so, the Nobel Prize Committee would have scarcely been in a position to award me the prize without any of the other things which I have done since. If I had qualified for it only and already with *Buddenbrooks*, then why did I not receive it twenty-five years ago? The earliest indication I had that my name was being mentioned in this connection came to me in 1913, after the appearance of *Death in Venice*. Beyond a doubt the Committee comes quite freely to its own decisions; and yet it cannot, after all, follow only its own judgement. It must address itself to the approbation of the world in general; and I think that after *Buddenbrooks* something else had to come out of me before the Committee could count on even the degree of approbation that it did get.

The Stockholm event lent festal emphasis to a long-arranged-for lecture tour on the Rhine. The ceremonies in the Aula of the University of Bonn—whose Philosophical Faculty had conferred upon me the degree of *doctor honoris causa* shortly after the war—will remain ever memorable to me by reason of a press of students who subjected

MOTHER [*cups his face in her hands*]: They made an old man out of you. [*Touches his hair.*] Look, you're grey.

GEORGE [*—her pity, open and unabashed, reaches into him, and he smiles sadly*]: I know, I—

MOTHER: I told you when you went away, don't try for medals.

GEORGE [*laughs, tiredly*]: I didn't try, Kate. They made it very easy for me.

MOTHER [*actually angry*]: Go on. You're all alike. [*To ANN.*] Look at him, why did you say he's fine? He looks like a ghost.

GEORGE [*relishing her solicitude*]: I feel all right.

MOTHER: I'm sick to look at you. What's the matter with your mother, why don't she feed you?

ANN: He just hasn't any appetite.

MOTHER: If he ate in my house he'd have an appetite. [*To ANN.*] I pity your husband! [*To GEORGE.*] Sit down. I'll make you a sandwich.

GEORGE [*—sits with an embarrassed laugh*]: I'm really not hungry.

MOTHER: Honest to God, it breaks my heart to see what happened to all the children. How we worked and * planned for you, and you end up no better than us.

GEORGE [*with deep feeling for her*]: You . . . you haven't changed at all, you know that, Kate?

MOTHER: None of us changed, Georgie. We all love you. Joe was just talking about the day you were born and the water got shut off. People were carrying basins from a block away—a stranger would have thought the whole neighborhood was on fire! [*They laugh. She sees the juice. To ANN.*] Why didn't you give him some juice!

ANN [*defensively*]: I offered it to him.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

chemistry; and Frederick Böök, academician and literary historian.

Only slowly after my return home did the waves begin to subside, after the flood tide upon which my life had risen. It is an unnerving experience to have come very publicly into the possession of a sum of money—as much as many an industrialist puts away every year and no notice taken of it—and suddenly to be stared in the face by all the misery in the world, which the amount of the figure has stimulated to assail the unlucky winner's conscience with claims of every size and kind. There was something indescribably menacing and even spitefully daemonic in the tone of the demand, in the expression of that thousand-headed need that reached out to clutch at the much-talked-of money. One saw oneself driven to a choice of two *rôles*: either the mammon-calloused wretch or the simpleton who flings into a bottomless well a sum of money intended for other ends. I cannot say that my organizing capacities were equal to the demands which my outer life put upon them in slowly and steadily mounting degree. To satisfy them would have needed a well-staffed office with departments for translation,

[LYDIA enters on porch. As soon as she sees him]

LYDIA: Hey, Georgie! Georgie! Georgie! Georgie!
Georgie! [She comes down to him eagerly. She has a
flowered hat in her hand, which KATE takes from her as
she goes to GEORGE.]

GEORGE [as they shake hands eagerly, warmly]: Hello,
Laughy. What'd you do, grow?

LYDIA: I'm a big girl now.

MOTHER: Look what she can do to a hat!

ANN [to LYDIA, admiring the hat]: Did you make that?

MOTHER: In ten minutes! [She puts it on.]

LYDIA [fixing it on her head]: I only rearranged it.

GEORGE: You still make your own clothes?

CHRIS [of MOTHER]: Ain't she classy! All she needs
now is a Russian wolfhound.

MOTHER [moving her head]: It feels like somebody is
sitting on my head.

ANN: No, it's beautiful, Kate.

MOTHER [kisses LYDIA. To GEORGE]: She's a genius!
You should've married her [They laugh.]. This one can
feed you!

LYDIA [strangely embarrassed]: Oh, stop that, Kate.

GEORGE [to LYDIA]: Didn't I hear you had a baby?

MOTHER: You don't hear so good. She's got three babies.

GEORGE [a little hurt by it—to LYDIA]: No kidding,
three?

LYDIA: Yea, it was one, two, three—You've been away a
long time, Georgie.

GEORGE: I'm beginning to realize.

MOTHER [to CHRIS and GEORGE]: The trouble with
you kids is you *think* too much.

LYDIA: Well, we think, too.

MOTHER: Yes, but not all the time.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

I expect to find the sky above and much of the earth beneath unchanged after three thousand five hundred years.

MOTHER: And you didn't laugh enough. While you were getting mad about Fascism Frank was getting into her bed.

GEORGE [*to CHRIS*]: He won the war, Frank.

CHRIS: All the battles.

MOTHER [*in pursuit of this mood*]: The day they started the draft, Georgie, I told you you loved that girl.

CHRIS [*laughs*]: And truer love hath no man!

MOTHER: I'm smarter than any of you.

GEORGE [*laughing*]: She's wonderful!

MOTHER: And now you're going to listen to me, George. You had big principles, Eagle Scouts the three of you; so now I got a tree, and this one [*indicating CHRIS*] when the weather gets bad he can't stand on his feet; and that big dope [*pointing to LYDIA's house*] next door who never reads anything but Andy Gump has three children and his house paid off. Stop being a philosopher, and look after yourself. Like Joe was just saying—you move back here, he'll help you get set, and I'll find you a girl and put a smile on your face.

GEORGE: Joe? Joe wants me here?

ANN [*eagerly*]: He asked me to tell you, and I think it's a good idea.

MOTHER: Certainly. Why must you make believe you hate us? Is that another principle?—that you have to hate us? You don't hate us, George, I know you, you can't fool me, I diapered you. [*Suddenly to ANN*.] You remember Mr Marcy's daughter?

ANN [*laughing, to GEORGE*]: She's got you hooked already! [*GEORGE laughs, is excited.*]

MOTHER: You look her over, George; you'll see she's the most beautiful—

CHRIS: She's got warts, George.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

BETRACHTUNGEN EINES UNPOLITISCHEN

Autobiographical reflections

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1918

HERR UND HUND

[A Man and His Dog]. Idyll

Contains also *Gesang vom Kindchen*, an idyll in verse

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1919

WÄLSUNGENBLUT

Tale

München, Phantasmus Verlag. 1921

BEMÜHUNGEN

Essays

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1922

REDE UND ANTWORT

Essays

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1922

BEKENNTNISSE DES HOCHSTAPLERS FELIX KRULL:

Buch der Kindheit

Fragment of a novel

Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1923

DER ZAUBERBERG

[The Magic Mountain]. Novel

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1924

UNORDNUNG UND FRÜHES LEID

[Disorder and Early Sorrow]. Short novel

Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag. 1926

KELLER: Oh, little of everything. Pressure-cookers, an assembly for washing-machines. Got a nice, flexible plant now. So how'd you find Dad? Feel all right?

GEORGE [*searching KELLER, speaking indecisively*]: No, he's not well, Joe.

KELLER [*lighting his cigar*]: Not his heart again, is it?

GEORGE: It's everything, Joe. It's his soul.

KELLER [*blowing out smoke*]: Uh huh—

CHRIS: How about seeing what they did with your house?

KELLER: Leave him be.

GEORGE [*to CHRIS, indicating KELLER*]: I'd like to talk to him.

KELLER: Sure, he just got here. That's the way they do, George. A little man makes a mistake and they hang him by the thumbs; the big ones become ambassadors. I wish you'd-a told me you were going to see Dad.

GEORGE [*studying him*]: I didn't know you were interested.

KELLER: In a way, I am. I would like him to know, George, that as far as I'm concerned, any time he wants, he's got a place with me. I would like him to know that.

GEORGE: He hates your guts, Joe. Don't you know that?

KELLER: I imagined it. But that can change, too.

MOTHER: Steve was never like that.

GEORGE: He's like that now. He'd like to take every man who made money in the war and put him up against a wall.

CHRIS: He'll need a lot of bullets.

GEORGE: And he'd better not get any.

KELLER: That's a sad thing to hear.

GEORGE [*with bitterness dominant*]: Why? What'd you expect him to think of you?

KELLER [*—the force of his nature rising, but under control*]: I'm sad to see he hasn't changed. As long as I know him,

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

LEIDEN UND GRÖSSE DER MEISTER

Essays *Berlin, S. Fischer Verlag.* 1935

FREUD UND DIE ZUKUNFT

Lecture *Vienna, Bermann-Fischer Verlag.* 1936

EIN BRIEFWECHSEL

[An Exchange of Letters]
Zürich, Dr. Oprecht & Helbling AG. 1937

SCHOPENHAUER

Essay *Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag.* 1938

ACHTUNG, EUROPA!

Manifest
Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag. 1938

DIE SCHÖNSTEN ERZÄHLUNGEN

Contains *Tonio Kröger, Der Tod in Venedig, Unordnung und frühes Leid, Mario und der Zauberer*
Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag. 1938

DAS PROBLEM DER FREIHEIT

Essay *Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag.* 1939

LOTTE IN WEIMAR

Novel *Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag.* 1939

DIE VERTAUSCHTEN KÖPFE: Eine indische Legende

[The Transposed Heads: A Legend of India]
Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer Verlag. 1940

[*A long pause, as GEORGE looks at ANN, CHRIS, KELLER, then back at her.*]

GEORGE: All right.

MOTHER: Now you're talking.

CHRIS: I've got a shirt that'll go right with that suit.

MOTHER: Size fifteen and a half, right, George?

GEORGE: Is Lydia—? I mean—Frank and Lydia coming?

MOTHER: I'll get you a date that'll make her look like a—
[*She starts upstage.*]

GEORGE [*laughing*]: No, I don't want a date.

CHRIS: I know somebody just for you! Charlotte Tanner!
[*He starts for the house.*]

KELLER: Call Charlotte, that's right.

MOTHER: Sure, call her up. [CHRIS *goes into house.*]

ANN: You go up and pick out a shirt and tie.

GEORGE [*stops, looks around at them and the place*]: I never felt at home anywhere but here. I feel so— [He *nearly laughs, and turns away from them.*] Kate, you look so young, you know? You didn't change at all. It... rings an old bell. [Turns to KELLER.] You too, Joe, you're amazingly the same. The whole atmosphere is.

KELLER: Say, I ain't got time to get sick.

MOTHER: He hasn't been laid up in fifteen years.

KELLER: Except my flu during the war.

MOTHER: Huhh?

KELLER: My flu, when I was sick during... the war.

MOTHER: Well, sure... [To GEORGE.] I mean except for that flu. [GEORGE *stands perfectly still.*] Well, it slipped my mind, don't look at me that way. He wanted to go to the shop but he couldn't lift himself off the bed. I thought he had pneumonia.

GEORGE: Why did you say he's never—?

FRANK: Just a minute now. I'll tell you something and you can do as you please. Just let me say it. He was supposed to have died on November twenty-fifth. But November twenty-fifth was his favorable day.

CHRIS: Mother!

MOTHER: Listen to him!

FRANK: It was a day when everything good was shining on him, the kind of day he should've married on. You can laugh at a lot of it, I can understand you laughing. But the odds are a million to one that a man won't die on his favorable day. That's known, that's known, Chris!

MOTHER: Why isn't it possible, why isn't it possible, Chris!

GEORGE [to ANN]: Don't you understand what she's saying? She just told you to go. What are you waiting for now?

CHRIS: Nobody can tell her to go. [*A car horn is heard.*]

MOTHER [to FRANK]: Thank you, darling, for your trouble. Will you tell him to wait, Frank?

FRANK [*as he goes*]: Sure thing.

MOTHER [*calling out*]: They'll be right out, driver!

CHRIS: She's not leaving, Mother.

GEORGE: You heard her say it, he's never been sick!

MOTHER: He misunderstood me, Chris! [CHRIS looks at her, struck.]

GEORGE [to ANN]: He simply told your father to kill pilots, and covered himself in bed!

CHRIS: You'd better answer him, Annie. Answer him.

MOTHER: I packed your bag, darling.

CHRIS: What?

MOTHER: I packed your bag. All you've got to do is close it.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter

[Harrison of Paris] 1930

[Secker and Warburg] 1961

THREE ESSAYS

Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Contains translations of Friedrich und die grosse Koalition from Rede und Antwort, and of Goethe und Tolstoi and Okkulte Erlbnisse from Bemühungen

1932

PAST MASTERS AND OTHER PAPERS

Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter

1933

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

I. Joseph and His Brothers (The Tales of Jacob)

1934

II. Young Joseph

1935

III. Joseph in Egypt

1938

IV. Joseph the Provider

1944

The complete work in 1 volume

1948

Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter

STORIES OF THREE DECADES

*Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Contains all of Thomas Mann's fiction prior to 1940 except the long novels**

1936

THE COMING VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY

Translated by Agnes E. Meyer

1938

Includes An Exchange of Letters, translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter

* Included in *Stories of a Lifetime*.

MOTHER [*rolling out of her*]: Till he comes ; for ever and ever till he comes !

CHRIS [*as an ultimatum*]: Mother, I'm going ahead with it.

MOTHER: Chris, I've never said no to you in my life, now I say no !

CHRIS: You'll never let him go till I do it.

MOTHER: I'll never let him go and you'll never let him go !

CHRIS: I've let him go. I've let him go a long—

MOTHER [*with no less force, but turning from him*]: Then let your father go. [*Pause. CHRIS stands transfixed.*]

KELLER: She's out of her mind.

MOTHER: Altogether ! [*To CHRIS, but not facing them.*]
Your brother's alive, darling, because if he's dead, your father killed him. Do you understand me now ? As long as you live, that boy is alive. God does not let a son be killed by his father. Now you see, don't you ? Now you see. [*Beyond control, she hurries up and into house.*]

KELLER [*—CHRIS has not moved. He speaks insinuatingly, questioningly*]: She's out of her mind.

CHRIS [*in a broken whisper*]: Then . . . you did it ?

KELLER [*with the beginning of plea in his voice*]: He never flew a P-40—

CHRIS [*struck ; deadly*]: But the others.

KELLER [*insistently*]: She's out of her mind. [*He takes a step towards CHRIS, pleadingly.*]

CHRIS [*unyielding*]: Dad . . . you did it ?

KELLER: He never flew a P-40, what's the matter with you ?

CHRIS [*still asking, and saying*]: Then you did it. To the others.

[*Both hold their voices down.*]

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

THE BLACK SWAN

*Translated by Williard R. Trask** 1954

CONFESSIONS OF FELIX KRULL, CONFIDENCE
MAN: THE EARLY YEARS

Translated by Denver Lindley 1955

LAST ESSAYS

*Translated by Richard and Clara Winston and
Tania and James Stern* 1959

STORIES OF A LIFETIME: Two volumes

The collected stories, including *Stories of Three
Decades, The Transposed Heads, Tables of
the Law, The Black Swan* 1961

LETTERS TO PAUL AMANN

Translated by Richard and Clara Winston 1961

* Included in *Stories of a Lifetime*.

CELEBRATED 2003

swear to God. I thought they'd stop 'em before anybody took off. 7

CHRIS: Then why'd you ship them out?

KELLER: By the time they could spot them I thought I'd have the process going again, and I could show them they needed me and they'd let it go by. But weeks passed and I got no kick-back, so I was going to tell them.

CHRIS: Then why didn't you tell them?

KELLER: It was too late. The paper, it was all over the front page, twenty-one went down, it was too late. They came with handcuffs into the shop, what could I do? [He sits on bench.] Chris... Chris, I did it for you, it was a chance and I took it for you. I'm sixty-one years old, when would I have another chance to make something for you? Sixty-one years old you don't get another chance, do ya?

CHRIS: You even knew they wouldn't hold up in the air.

KELLER: I didn't say that.

CHRIS: But you were going to warn them not to use them—

KELLER: But that don't mean—

CHRIS: It means you knew they'd crash.

KELLER: It don't mean that.

CHRIS: Then you *thought* they'd crash.

KELLER: I was afraid maybe—

CHRIS: You were afraid maybe! God in heaven, what kind of a man are you? Kids were hanging in the air by those heads. You knew that!

KELLER: For you, a business for you!

CHRIS [with burning fury]: For me! Where do you live, where have you come from? For me!—I was dying every day and you were killing my boys and you did it for me? What the hell do you think I was thinking

of, the goddam business? Is that as far as your mind can see, the business? What is that, the world—the business? What the hell do you mean, you did it for me? Don't you have a country? Don't you live in the world? What the hell are you? You're not even an animal, no animal kills his own, what are you? What must I do to you? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth, what must I do? [*With his fist he pounds down upon his father's shoulder. He stumbles away, covering his face as he weeps.*] What must I do, Jesus God, what must I do?

KELLER: Chris... My Chris....

CURTAIN

ACT. THREE

[Two o'clock the following morning. MOTHER is discovered on the rise, rocking ceaselessly in a chair, staring at her thoughts. It is an intense, slight sort of rocking. A light shows from upstairs bedroom, lower floor windows being dark. The moon is strong and casts its bluish light.]

Presently JIM dressed in jacket and hat, appears, and seeing her, goes up beside her.]

JIM: Any news?

MOTHER: No news.

JIM *[gently]*: You can't sit up all night, dear, why don't you go to bed?

MOTHER: I'm waiting for Chris. Don't worry about me, Jim, I'm perfectly all right.

JIM: But it's almost two o'clock.

MOTHER: I can't sleep. *[Slight pause.]* You had an emergency?

JIM *[tiredly]*: Somebody had a headache and thought he was dying. *[Slight pause.]* Half of my patients are quite mad. Nobody realizes how many people are walking around loose, and they're cracked as coconuts. Money. Money-money-money-money. You say it long enough it doesn't mean anything. *[She smiles, makes a silent, laugh.]* Oh, how I'd love to be around when that happens!

MOTHER *[shaking her head]*: You're so childish, Jim! Sometimes you are.

JIM *[looks at her a moment]*: Kate. *[Pause.]* What happened?

MOTHER: I told you. He had an argument with Joe. Then he got in the car and drove away.

JIM: What kind of an argument?

MOTHER: An argument, Joe . . . He was crying like a child, before.

JIM: They argued about Ann?

MOTHER [*after slight hesitation*]: No, not Ann. Imagine? [*Indicates lighted window above.*] She hasn't come out of that room since he left. All night in that room.

JIM [*looks at window, then at her*]: What'd Joe do, tell him?

MOTHER [*stops rocking*]: Tell him what? ~~Joe killed~~ ^{he killed}

JIM: Don't be afraid, Kate, I know. I've always known. ^{qui}

MOTHER: How?

JIM: It occurred to me a long time ago.

MOTHER: I always had the feeling that in the back of his head, Chris . . . almost knew. I didn't think it would be such a shock.

JIM [*gets up*]: Chris would never know how to live with a thing like that. It takes a certain talent—for lying. You have it, and I do. But not him.

MOTHER: What do you mean . . . ? He's not coming back?

JIM: Oh, no, he'll come back. We all come back, Kate. These private little revolutions always die. The compromise is always made. In a peculiar way, Frank is right—every man does have a star. The star of one's honesty. And you spend your life groping for it, but once it's out it never lights again. I don't think he went very far. He probably just wanted to be alone to watch his star go out.

MOTHER: Just as long as he comes back.

JIM: I wish he wouldn't, Kate. One year I simply took off, went to New Orleans; for two months I lived on bananas and milk, and studied a certain disease. It was beautiful. And then she came, and she cried. And I

went back home with her. And now I live in the usual darkness ; I can't find myself ; it's even hard sometimes to remember the kind of man I wanted to be. I'm a good husband ; Chris is a good son—he'll come back.

[KELLER comes out on porch in dressing-gown and slippers. He goes upstage—to alley. JIM goes to him.]

JIM: I have a feeling he's in the park. I'll look around for him. Put her to bed, Joe ; this is no good for what she's got. [JIM exits up driveway.]

KELLER [coming down]: What does he want here ?

MOTHER: His friend is not home.

KELLER [comes down to her. His voice is husky.]: I don't like him mixing in so much.

MOTHER: It's too late, Joe. He knows.

KELLER [apprehensively]: How does he know ?

MOTHER: He guessed a long time ago.

KELLER: I don't like that.

MOTHER [laughs dangerously, quietly into the line]: What you don't like ?

KELLER: Yeah, what I don't like.

MOTHER: You can't bull yourself through this one, Joe, you better be smart now. This thing—this thing is not over yet.

KELLER [indicating lighted window above]: And what is she doing up there ? She don't come out of the room.

MOTHER: I don't know, what is she doing ? Sit down, stop being mad. You want to live ? You better figure out your life.

KELLER: She don't know, does she ?

MOTHER: She saw Chris storming out of here. It's one and one—she knows how to add.

KELLER: Maybe I ought to talk to her ?

MOTHER: Don't ask me, Joe.

KELLER [*—almost an outburst*]: Then who do I ask?

But I don't think she'll do anything about it.

MOTHER: You're asking me again.

KELLER: I'm askin' you. What am I, a stranger? I thought I had a family here. What happened to my family?

MOTHER: You've got a family. I'm simply telling you that I have no strength to think any more.

KELLER: You have no strength. The minute there's trouble you have no strength.

MOTHER: Joe, you're doing the same thing again; all your life whenever there's trouble you yell at me and you think that settles it.

KELLER: Then what do I do? Tell me, talk to me, what do I do?

MOTHER: Joe... I've been thinking this way. If he comes back—

KELLER: What do you mean 'if'? He's comin' back!

MOTHER: I think if you sit him down and you—explain yourself. I mean you ought to make it clear to him that you know you did a terrible thing. [*Not looking into his eyes.*] I mean if he saw that you realize what you did. You see?

KELLER: What ice does that cut?

MOTHER [*a little fearfully*]: I mean if you told him that you want to pay for what you did.

KELLER [*sensing... quietly*]: How can I pay?

MOTHER: Tell him—you're willing to go to prison. [*Pause.*]

KELLER [*struck, amazed*]: I'm willing to—?

MOTHER [*quickly*]: You wouldn't go, he wouldn't ask you to go. But if you told him you wanted to, if he could feel that you wanted to pay, maybe he would forgive you.

KELLER: He would forgive me! For what?

MOTHER: Joe, you know what I mean.

KELLER: I don't know what you mean! You wanted money, so I made money. What must I be forgiven? You wanted money, didn't you?

MOTHER: I didn't want it that way.

KELLER: I didn't want it that way, either! What difference is it what you want? I spoiled the both of you. I should've put him out when he was ten like I was put out, and made him earn his keep. Then he'd know how a buck is made in this world. Forgiven! I could live on a quarter a day myself, but I got a family so I—

MOTHER: Joe, Joe... It don't excuse it that you did it for the family.

KELLER: It's got to excuse it!

MOTHER: There's something bigger than the family to him.

KELLER: Nothin' is bigger!

MOTHER: There is to him.

KELLER: There's nothin' he could do that I wouldn't forgive. Because he's my son. Because I'm his father and he's my son.

MOTHER: Joe, I tell you—

KELLER: Nothin's bigger than that. And you're goin' to tell him, you understand? I'm his father and he's my son, and if there's something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head! * *

MOTHER: You stop that!

KELLER: You heard me. Now you know what to tell him. [*Pause. He moves from her—halts.*] But he wouldn't put me away though... He wouldn't do that... would he?

MOTHER: He loved you, Joe, you broke his heart.

KELLER: But to put me away...

MOTHER: I don't know. I'm beginning to think we don't really know him. They say in the war he was such a killer. Here he was always afraid of mice. I don't know him. I don't know what he'll do.

KELLER: Goddam, if Larry was alive he wouldn't act like this. He understood the way the world is made. He listened to me. To him the world had a forty-foot front, it ended at the building line. This one, everything bothers him. You make a deal, overcharge two cents, and his hair falls out. He don't understand money. Too easy, it came too easy. Yes, sir. Larry. That was a boy we lost. Larry. Larry. [*He slumps on chair in front of her.*] What am I gonna do, Kate?

MOTHER: Joe, Joe, please . . . You'll be all right, nothing is going to happen.

KELLER [*desperately, lost*]: (For you, Kate, for both of you, that's all I ever lived for. . . .)

MOTHER: I know, darling, I know. [*ANN enters from house. They say nothing, waiting for her to speak.*]

ANN: Why do you stay up? I'll tell you when he comes.

KELLER [*rises, goes to her*]: You didn't eat supper, did you? [*To MOTHER*] Why don't you make her something?

MOTHER: Sure, I'll—

ANN: Never mind, Kate, I'm all right. [*They are unable to speak to each other.*] There's something I want to tell you. [*She starts, then halts.*] I'm not going to do anything about it.

MOTHER: She's a good girl! [*To KELLER*] You see? She's a—

ANN: I'll do nothing about Joe, but you're going to do something for me. [*Directly to MOTHER.*] You made Chris feel guilty with me. Whether you wanted to or not, you've crippled him in front of me. I'd like you to

tell him that Larry is dead and that you know it. You understand me? I'm not going out of here alone. There's no life for me that way. I want you to set him free. And then I promise you, everything will end, and we'll go away, and that's all.

KELLER: You'll do that. You'll tell him.

ANN: I know what I'm asking, Kate. You had two sons. But you've only got one now.

KELLER: You'll tell him.

ANN: And you've got to say to him so he knows you mean it.

MOTHER: My dear, if the boy was dead, it wouldn't depend on my words to make Chris know it. . . The night he gets into your bed, his heart will dry up. Because he knows and you know. To his dying day he'll wait for his brother! No, my dear, no such thing. You're going in the morning, and you're going alone. That's your life, that's your lonely life. [*She goes to porch, and starts in.*]

ANN: Larry is dead, Kate.

MOTHER [*—she stops*]: Don't speak to me.

ANN: I said he's dead. I know! He crashed off the coast of China November twenty-fifth! His engine didn't fail him. But he died. I know . . .

MOTHER: How did he die? You're lying to me. If you know, how did he die?

ANN: I loved him. You know I loved him. Would I have looked at anyone else if I wasn't sure? That's enough for you.

MOTHER [*moving on her*]: What's enough for me? What're you talking about? [*She grasps ANN's wrists.*]

ANN: You're hurting my wrists.

MOTHER: What are you talking about! [*Pause. She*

stares at ANN a moment, then turns and goes to KELLER.]

ANN: Joe, go in the house.

KELLER: Why should I—

ANN: Please go.

KELLER: Lemme know when he comes. [KELLER goes into house.]

MOTHER [*as she sees ANN taking a letter from her pocket*]:
What's that?

ANN: Sit down. [MOTHER moves left to chair, but does not sit.] First you've got to understand. When I came, I didn't have any idea that Joe—I had nothing against him or you. I came to get married. I hoped . . . So I didn't bring this to hurt you. I thought I'd show it to you only if there was no other way to settle Larry in your mind.

MOTHER: Larry? [*Snatches letter from ANN's hand.*]

ANN: He wrote it to me just before he—[MOTHER opens and begins to read letter.] I'm not trying to hurt you, Kate. You're making me do this, now remember you're—Remember. I've been so lonely, Kate . . . I can't leave here alone again. [*A long, low moan comes from MOTHER's throat as she reads.*] You made me show it to you. You wouldn't believe me. I told you a hundred times. why wouldn't you believe me!

MOTHER: Oh, my God . . .

ANN [*with pity and fear*]: Kate, please, please . . .

MOTHER: My God, my God . . .

ANN: Kate, dear, I'm so sorry . . . I'm so sorry.

[CHRIS enters from driveway. He seems exhausted.]

CHRIS: What's the matter—?

ANN: Where were you? . . . You're all perspired.
[MOTHER doesn't move.] Where were you?

CHRIS: Just drove around a little. I thought you'd be gone.

ANN: Where do I go? I have nowhere to go.

CHRIS [*to MOTHER*]: Where's Dad?

ANN: Inside lying down.

CHRIS: Sit down, both of you. I'll say what there is to say.

MOTHER: I didn't hear the car . . .

CHRIS: I left it in the garage.

MOTHER: Jim is out looking for you.

CHRIS: Mother . . . I'm going away. There are a couple of firms in Cleveland, I think I can get a place. I mean, I'm going away for good. [*To ANN alone.*] I know what you're thinking, Annie. It's true. I'm yellow. I was made yellow in this house because I suspected my father and I did nothing about it, but if I knew that night when I came home what I know now, he'd be in the district attorney's office by this time, and I'd have brought him there. Now if I look at him, all I'm able to do is cry.

MOTHER: What are you talking about? What else can you do?

CHRIS: I could jail him! I could jail him, if I were human any more. But I'm like everybody else now. I'm practical now. You made me practical.

MOTHER: But you have to be.

CHRIS: The cats in that alley are practical, the bums who ran away when we were fighting were practical. Only the dead ones weren't practical. But now I'm practical, and I spit on myself. I'm going away. I'm going now.

ANN [*going up to him*]: I'm coming with you.

CHRIS: No, Ann.

ANN: Chris, I don't ask you to do anything about Joe.

CHRIS: You do, you do.

ANN: I swear I never will.

CHRIS: In your heart you always will.

ANN: Then do what you have to do!

CHRIS: Do what? What is there to do? I've looked all night for a reason to make him suffer.

ANN: There's reason, there's reason!

CHRIS: What? Do I raise the dead when I put him behind bars? Then what'll I do it for? We used to shoot a man who acted like a dog, but honor was real there, you were protecting something. But here? This is the land of the great big dogs, you don't love a man here, you eat him! That's the principle; the only one we live by—it just happened to kill a few people this time, that's all. The world's that way, how can I take it out on him? What sense does that make? This is a zoo, a zoo!

ANN [*to MOTHER*]: You know what he's got to do! Tell him!

MOTHER: Let him go.

ANN: I won't let him go. You'll tell him what he's got to do . . .

MOTHER: Annie!

ANN: Then I will!

[*KELLER enters from house. CHRIS sees him, goes down near arbor.*]

KELLER: What's the matter with you? I want to talk to you.

CHRIS: I've got nothing to say to you.

KELLER [*taking his arm*]: I want to talk to you!

CHRIS [*pulling violently away from him*]: Don't do that, Dad. I'm going to hurt you if you do that. There's nothing to say, so say it quick.

KELLER: Exactly what's the matter? What's the matter? You got too much money? Is that what bothers you?

CHRIS [*with an edge of sarcasm*]: It bothers me.

KELLER: If you can't get used to it, then throw it away. You hear me? Take every cent and give it to charity,

throw it in the sewer. Does that settle it? In the sewer, that's all. You think I'm kidding? I'm tellin' you what to do, if it's dirty then burn it. It's your money, that's not my money. I'm a dead man, I'm an old dead man, nothing's mine. Well, talk to me! What do you want to do?

CHRIS: It's not what I want to do. It's what you want to do.

KELLER: What should I want to do? [CHRIS is silent.] Jail? You want me to go to jail? If you want me to go, say so! Is that where I belong? Then tell me so! [Slight pause.] What's the matter, why can't you tell me? [Furiously.] You say everything else to me, say that! [Slight pause.] I'll tell you why you can't say it. Because you know I don't belong there. Because you know! [With growing emphasis and passion, and a persistent tone of desperation.] Who worked for nothin' in that war? When they work for nothin', I'll work for nothin'. Did they ship a gun or a truck outa Detroit before they got their price? Is that clean? It's dollars and cents, nickels and dimes; war and peace, it's nickels and dimes, what's clean? Half the goddam country is gotta go if I go! That's why you can't tell me. \

CHRIS: That's exactly why.

KELLER: Then . . . why am I bad?

CHRIS: I know you're no worse than most men but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man. I saw you as my father. [Almost breaking.] I can't look at you this way, I can't look at myself!

[He turns away, unable to face KELLER. ANN goes quickly to MOTHER, takes letter from her and starts for CHRIS. MOTHER instantly rushes to intercept her.]

MOTHER: Give me that!

ANN: He's going to read it! [*She thrusts letter into CHRIS's hand.*] Larry. He wrote it to me the day he died.

KELLER: Larry!

MOTHER: Chris, it's not for you. [*He starts to read.*] Joe . . . go away . . .

KELLER [*mystified, frightened*]: Why'd she say, Larry, what—?

MOTHER [*desperately pushes him towards alley, glancing at CHRIS*]: Go to the street, Joe, go to the street! [*She comes down beside KELLER.*] Don't, Chris . . . [*Pleading from her whole soul.*] Don't tell him.

CHRIS [*quietly*]: Three and one half years . . . talking, talking. Now you tell me what you must do. . . . This is how he died, now tell me where you belong.

KELLER [*pleading*]: Chris, a man can't be a Jesus in this world!

CHRIS: I know all about the world. I know the whole crap story. Now listen to this, and tell me what a man's got to be! [*Reads.*] 'My dear Ann: . . . ' You listening? He wrote this the day he died. Listen. don't cry. . . . Listen! 'My dear Ann: It is impossible to put down the things I feel. But I've got to tell you something. Yesterday they flew in a load of papers from the States and I read about Dad and your father being convicted. I can't express myself. I can't tell you how I feel—I can't bear to live any more. Last night I circled the base for twenty minutes before I could bring myself in. How could he have done that? Every day three or four men never come back and he sits back there doing business. . . . I don't know how to tell you what I feel. . . . I can't face anybody. . . . I'm going out on a mission in a few minutes. They'll probably report me missing. If they do, I want you to know that you mustn't wait for me. I tell you. Ann, if I had him there now I could kill him—'[KELLER

grabs letter from CHRIS's hand and reads it. After a long pause.] Now blame the world. Do you understand that letter?

KELLER [*speaking almost inaudibly*]: I think I do. Get the car. I'll put on my jacket. [*He turns and starts slowly for the house. MOTHER rushes to intercept him.*]

MOTHER: Why are you going? You'll sleep, why are you going?

KELLER: I can't sleep here. I'll feel better if I go.

MOTHER: You're so foolish. Larry was your son too, wasn't he? You know he'd never tell you to do this.

KELLER [*looking at letter in his hand*]: Then what is this if it isn't telling me? Sure, he was my son. But I think to him they were all my sons. And I guess they were, I guess they were. I'll be right down. [*Exits into house.*]

MOTHER [*to CHRIS, with determination*]: You're not going to take him!

CHRIS: I'm taking him.

MOTHER: It's up to you, if you tell him to stay he'll stay. Go and tell him!

CHRIS: Nobody could stop him now.

MOTHER: You'll stop him! How long will he live in prison? Are you trying to kill him?

CHRIS [*holding out letter*]: I thought you read this!

MOTHER [*of Larry, the letter*]: The war is over! Didn't you hear? It's over!

CHRIS: Then what was Larry to you? A stone that fell into the water? It's not enough for him to be sorry. Larry didn't kill himself to make you and Dad sorry.

MOTHER: What more can we be?

CHRIS: You can be better! Once and for all you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it, and unless you know that, you threw away your son because that's why he died.

[A shot is heard in the house. They stand frozen for a brief second. CHRIS starts for porch, pauses a step. turns to ANN.]

CHRIS: Find Jim! *[He goes on into the house and ANN runs up driveway. MOTHER stands alone, transfixed.]*

MOTHER *[softly, almost moaning]*: Joe . . . Joe . . . Joe . . . Joe . . . *[CHRIS comes out of house, down to MOTHER's arms.]*

CHRIS *[almost crying]*: Mother, I didn't mean to—

MOTHER: Don't dear. Don't take it on yourself. Forget now. Live. *[CHRIS stirs as if to answer.]* Shhh . . . *[She puts his arms down gently and moves towards porch.]* Shhh . . . *[As she reaches porch steps she begins sobbing.]*

CURTAIN

COMMENTARY

THE BACKGROUND OF THE PLAY

Miller is usually regarded as an intellectual dramatist, that is, one whose plays express moral, social and political ideas. The nature and quality of these ideas have been discussed by his critics. Though there is considerable disagreement among them, they acknowledge as a rule that Miller is a strong critic of contemporary American society and its values. They also grant that Miller's views, both explicit as well as implied, are clear and coherent.

In themes that frequently recur, Miller appears to be arguing strongly in favour of a certain positive relationship between the individual and society, against injustice, exploitation, competition and vested private interest. He also exposes the human tendency to put one's self above all else, which causes confusion and suffering. The basic principles of the economic system (capitalism) in which Miller's characters enact their drama are directly or indirectly blamed for the psychological distortions which they exhibit.

Miller does not conceal his motives as a playwright but, on the contrary, pointedly defines them at crucial moments in his plays. A plausible defence of a false position by one of the characters is followed at some point by an attack on it, and the attack is in terms of social responsibility and ethical uprightness. We know that this second statement is an expression of Miller's point of view. The character who makes it is Miller's spokesman.

Every situation in a play by Miller develops till the issues it raises are unambiguously resolved. We are not

left to figure out for ourselves the meaning and implications of the play. We know, more or less precisely, what the author has in mind. Since he also takes a definite stand which seems to have ideological affiliations (to Marxism and socialism), he is sometimes unfairly described as a propagandist. Miller was never a card-holding member of the Communist Party but he was a Communist, till at least 1950, and supported Communist-inspired causes during one phase of his life. In his testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities he declared that he would not support any cause dominated by the Communists but neither would he create trouble for any of his former friends or associates by mentioning their names.

Every reader has to decide for himself the extent to which the beliefs that Miller unquestionably wishes to propagate are integrated in the narrative structure and dialogue of his plays. Miller has denied that he begins to write with preconceived ideas which he imposes upon his imaginative creations. He claims that he discovers what he wants to say in the process of saying it. 'So you really don't know,' an interviewer asked him, 'how your play is going to end when you start it?' Miller replied: 'I don't. I have a rough notion . . . for instance, if a play has a hero in it who will die, I know that. And I must know the core of irony involved. But little more in terms of the progression of the story. The shape and, so to speak, the tempo of the development, is created within the play itself.' (*As We Are*, ed. Henry Brandon, 1962).

This may be true, yet Miller is undoubtedly using ideas in a play that he has thought out before writing it. The reader can hardly find fault with that. It is one of the ways in which creative and critical writing is done. The only valid question is whether the plays have a dramatic and

theatrical life of their own, or whether they are merely partisan vehicles of Miller's social ideas. The value of asking this, particularly for the student, lies not in arriving at some final, definite judgement but in exploring the various aspects of Miller's plays and understanding them as fully as possible. The student should be prepared to carry out this intellectual investigation with an open mind and not be unduly influenced by the opinions of critics.

With one or two exceptions, [Miller's writings are set in the middle of the twentieth century and deal with some of its typical problems.] The material is generally derived from personal experience. Students of his work have established without much effort parallels between specific situations in Miller's plays and events in his life. Similarly, his characters make statements which echo his own more direct utterances in his essays.

Because of his early experience as a clerical and manual worker, and his direct knowledge of the lower middle-class through his relations and friends, Miller's characters are never aristocratic. They may make money but they remain culturally underprivileged. [Miller's is a democratic theatre where a wide range of human social types may be found.] Miller's people inhabit a kind of sub-culture that is banal. Their speech is colloquial and slangy and characteristically American. Yet this should present no special problems of comprehension to the Indian reader. The differences between British and American English have often been unduly exaggerated. There is, however, greater uniformity than difference in areas such as grammar, morphology and pronunciation. Differences occur largely in vocabulary. For instance, *Parliament* and *Congress*; *autumn* and *fall*; *lift* and *elevator*; *tap* and *faucet*; *flyover* and *overpass*.

Miller believes that tragedy in the classic sense need not be restricted to persons of high birth but can happen to

ordinary people. In an essay entitled, 'Tragedy and the Common Man', written in 1949, he locates the source of tragic action in 'fanaticism', the total determination to risk everything in a conflict. The hero's conception of himself may be wrong, but he must be willing to sacrifice himself to it, and this sacrifice is tragic. It flows from an obsession which allows, psychologically, no way out. Suicide is the only answer.

[The form of Miller's plays is, as he himself has described it, 'conventional realism'. Though he has freely used non-realistic theatre devices, he builds his plays on a groundwork of facts and real, life-like relationships. The narrative proceeds from cause to effect, from the past to the future. Words and actions in Miller's plays have consequences which reveal human nature in a particular social context. The realistic picture of life which Miller's plays project includes moral judgements on that picture. The playwright's aim is to bring out the wider, human significance of individual destiny—a significance which is objective and universal.]

In the interview quoted earlier, Miller says, 'A playwright provides answers by the questions he chooses to ask, by the exact conflicts in which he places his people.' Miller finds realism adequate for this purpose: characters resembling those we meet in real life, involved in situations of the kind that are familiar in everyday existence and developing in accordance with well-known psychological principles at a particular time in a particular place. In *All My Sons*, he did not go beyond this formula. p

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY

The three acts of *All My Sons* portray events that take place from a Sunday morning to the early hours of Monday (2 a.m. onwards), roughly eighteen hours. The scene of the action throughout is the back yard of the Keller home in which live Joe Keller (60) an industrialist, his wife Kate ('early fifties') and their son Chris (32). Their neighbours, involved with the Kellers in some ways, as family friends, are Dr Jim Bayliss (40) and his wife Sue ('rounding forty'), and Frank Lubey (32) and his wife Lydia (27). Bert, the eight-year-old son of Jim and Sue, appears briefly in the first act.

In the Keller home when the play begins is Ann Deever (26) who was engaged to Larry Keller, Chris' brother. Larry fought as a pilot in the Second World War and was reported missing. It is presumed by everybody that he is dead, except by his mother, Kate, who insists on believing that Larry will some day return. The complex psychological motives at the root of this illusion play a major role in the development of the plot. Chris and Ann intend to marry. Kate objects on the ground that it would mean believing that Larry is dead.

Ann's father, Steve, was Keller's partner in a factory turning out cylinder heads for the Army Air Force during the war. A batch of these proved to be defectively manufactured but they were passed by the factory, and caused the death of twenty-one American pilots. There was a court case against the partners and both were convicted, but in the appeal that followed Keller was apparently given the benefit of the doubt. At any rate, he was allowed to go while Steve, Ann's father, was sent to jail where he is at the time the play opens.

Steve held that Keller had been told of the defective cylinder heads and had approved of passing them on for use. Keller had denied this in court. The neighbours were inclined to believe that he was guilty, but Keller built up his business again and is on good terms with them. He tries to persuade himself that they have forgotten the story, but they haven't.

Ann believes and so does her brother George that their father 'knowingly shipped out parts that would crash an airplane'. Angry and ashamed, they have abandoned him in jail. Keller attempts to explain to Ann the conditions in which wartime production was done and defends his former partner from any charge worse than a mistaken decision. Chris describes to Ann, in discussing their proposed marriage, his frustration on finding that life after the war was the same as it had been before—'that rat-race again . . . nobody was changed at all'. It meant that those killed in the war had sacrificed themselves in vain. The values of co-operation and mutual responsibility which they had built up by their actions had been lost, and people behaved as if the war had been something like a 'bus accident'.

When Chris and Ann formally announce their intention of getting married, there is a trunk-call from George, Ann's brother, now a lawyer. The call is from Columbus (Ohio) where their father is serving his sentence in jail. Keller shows his nervousness at this and so does his wife. From their conversation we suspect that both have an inkling of what is about to happen: the exposure of Keller's complicity in the crime for which his partner is in jail.

Before George appears on the scene, in the second act, Ann learns from Sue that the neighbours still believe Keller to be guilty. Chris says: 'Do you think I could forgive him if he'd done that thing?' George comes to try to

break up the marriage between Chris and Ann. He angrily tells them the story of the time when the defective cylinder heads were noticed by his father. George heard the story from his father whom he had, on an impulse, visited in jail, to inform him of the forthcoming marriage between Chris and Ann. George believes his father's story: that Keller had been informed of the defectives and had instructed Steve on the phone 'to weld, cover up the cracks in any way he could, and ship them out'. Keller had promised to take the responsibility.

Keller had not gone to the factory that day on the pretext that he had a cold. In the court case, his alibi was not believed but in the appeal it was; so Steve was sentenced and Keller set free. There is a confrontation with Keller, and for a time George's faith in his father's version of the event is shaken by Keller's sympathetic and plausible interpretation of it. But the truth comes out eventually. Keller justifies his criminal conduct and says his subsequent lies were for the sake of Chris. Chris rejects that way of seeing it.

In Act 3 we learn that Chris had driven away after the argument with his father and the collapse of his world. Kate wants Keller to admit to Chris that he had done a 'terrible thing' and was ready to pay for it. She thinks that alone would bring Chris back to them. Keller feels this is outrageous, since everything he had done was for the family, or so he imagines. Kate points out that for Chris there's something larger than the family.

Ann enters when this argument is going on, and asks Kate to accept Larry's death so that Chris won't feel guilty about marrying her. Kate refuses. She insists that Larry may still be alive. Chris returns and announces his intention of going away for ever, without Ann. It is clear to Keller that his wife and son wish him to go to jail

Keller protests: 'Half the goddam country is gotta go if I go.' The implication is that criminal acts of the sort he had committed were quite common during the war, and were done for money. Ann hands over a letter Larry had written her on the day he died. Larry had read in the newspapers about Keller and Steve being convicted. 'I can't bear to live any more,' he had written, '... I'm going out on a mission in a few minutes. They'll probably report me missing.'

Keller hears Chris read out the letter and makes a move that suggests he wants to give himself up and confess his guilt. Kate tries to dissuade him. 'Larry was your son too, wasn't he? You know he'd never tell you to do this.' Keller's reply is the major insight of the play and gives it its title. 'Sure he was my son. But I think to him they were all my sons. And I guess, they were, I guess they were.' He goes into the house and a shot is heard. Kate says to Chris, 'Don't take it on yourself. Forget now. Live.'

THEMES AND IDEAS IN THE PLAY

The play's central event is a business man's evasion of responsibility for a decision in wartime which led to the loss of twenty-one lives. Keller, who has a contract for the manufacture of airplane cylinder heads, knows that he is guilty. His wife knows it. The neighbours know it. Even his son Chris suspects it but cannot face the fact that he does. In Act 3, Chris accuses himself of cowardice: 'It's true. I'm yellow. I was made yellow in this house because I suspected my father and I did nothing about it ...'

Miller's concern with large social issues is really the key to our understanding of the play. In *All My Sons* family

relations are predominant. To Keller 'nothin's bigger' than the family. It's everything to him. When Chris discovers his father's complicity in the sale of defective cylinder heads to the Army Air Force, he turns against him. Rather than go on living, Keller shoots himself. Keller's death is a parable of our times. Through it Miller points to our inescapable social responsibilities. Any evasiveness or refusal is severely punished. Plays such as these are, therefore, specially relevant today.

The agony of Chris, which is a dominating feature of the play, is partly caused by his realization that he does not have the courage to get his father sent to jail. He can only wish he could do it. 'But I'm like everybody else now,' he confesses to his mother, 'I'm practical now. You made me practical.' The only way he can atone for his weakness is by 'going away'.

Chris makes a transition in his thinking, when the crisis breaks on him, from his personal predicament to the nature of the society in which he lives. If it were a society where 'honor was real', making his father suffer for his crime would have some point. Chris is acutely aware that capitalist society emphasizes competition over co-operation, that it tends to overlook the need for human solidarity, mutual aid and support for the weak based on egalitarian principles. 'This is the land of the great, big dogs,' he says bitterly, 'you don't love a man here, you eat him! That's the principle, the only one we live by—it just happened to kill a few people this time, that's all. The world's that way, how can I take it out on him? What sense does that make? This is a zoo, a zoo!'

Chris may seem to be exaggerating but the value of the exaggeration lies in the idealism which is its positive side. It is related to the post-war disillusionment of both civilians and soldiers, those who survived after seeing the horrors of

war as well as some of the splendid, human qualities it brought out. They expected a better social order to emerge from humanity's experience in the war. Chris had described this feeling to Ann in Act I. After he hears his father defend his criminal action in the name of business imperatives, Chris says furiously, 'Is that as far as your mind can see, the business . . . Don't you have a country? Don't you live in the world?' Chris is here condemning not only his father but the short-sightedness of the typical business man's creed.

Closely linked with this central issue is the decision of Chris and Ann to marry, despite the opposition of Kate. Her opposition is not only because the marriage would require her to consider Larry dead, but because if Larry is dead, it means his father killed him. 'God does not let a son be killed by his father,' she says, meaning that the thought is unbearable to her. The psychological source of her illusion that Larry is alive is here uncovered.

The pilots who lost their lives because of the defective cylinder heads flew P-40s and Larry never flew a P-40, as Keller points out. All the same, the mother's statement indicates she knows her husband is responsible for the death of the others. Chris grasps this point and forces the vital confession from his father. The human agency by means of which Keller's partner in jail plays a role in bringing out the terrible truth is his son George, Ann's brother. George hears the story from his father for the first time when he visits him to give him the news of Ann's proposed marriage to Chris. 'You're not going to marry him,' he tells Ann. 'Because his father destroyed your family.'

In addition to these basically tragic conflicts, the dramatic substance of *All My Sons* is enriched with marginal character revelations, episodes and ideas. Amid the routine banalities of conversation, necessary to create an

air of the real and the normal, erupt significant problems of will, temperament, choice and values. A notable example concerns Jim, a successful doctor, who wants to 'do medical research' and feels 'he's compromising by not giving up everything for it'. Jim makes some striking observations to Kate, in Act 3, on hearing that Chris has quarrelled with his father and gone away:

'O no, he'll come back. We all come back, Kate. These private little revolutions always die. The compromise is always made . . . every man does have a star. The star of one's honesty. And you spend your life groping for it, but once it's out it never lights again.' Kate says she hopes Chris will come back. 'I wish he wouldn't, Kate,' Jim remarks. 'One year I simply took off, went to New Orleans; for two months I lived on bananas and milk, and studied a certain disease. It was beautiful. And then she came (that is, his wife), and she cried. And I went back home with her. And now I live in the usual darkness; I can't find myself; it's even hard sometimes to remember the kind of man I wanted to be. I'm a good husband; Chris is a good son—he'll come back.'

The conflict between being a good husband or a good son and the deeper loyalty to one's self and convictions is here clearly pointed out. Larry's suicide is caused by the frustration of his idealistic feeling for his father. Chris reacts powerfully to his father's guilt for the same reason. 'I know you're no worse than most men but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man. I saw you as my father. [*Almost breaking*] I can't look at you this way, I can't look at myself!' George, the lawyer, asked about his profession, declares he found the law sensible in the study 'but outside there doesn't seem to be much of a law'. These casual or calculated comments on the social context of the characters intensify the vision of the play.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

ACT ONE

Page

1 *August of our era*: any month of August in our time.

trellised arbor: structure of wooden or metal cross-barred work around a grassy seat.

stolid mind: unimaginative mind.

the imprint of the machine-shop worker: his appearance is still slightly like that of the manual worker that he once was.

2 *dredged out of*: dug or gathered from.

A man among men: an efficient, business-like man who knows how to handle people.

wry self-controlled man: restrained, critical person.

self-effacing: one who avoids being noticed.

Gonna rain tonight: It's going to rain tonight.

Yeah: Yes.

Then it can't rain: (ironical) indicating distrust of weather reports.

opinionated: excessively confident of his own opinions.

peevishness when crossed: foolishness or irritation when contradicted.

Hya: hello.

What's doin'?: What's happening?

Walking off my breakfast: helping it to be digested by the mild exercise of walking.

That beautiful?: Isn't that beautiful?

3 *forester*: one who is in charge of a forest.

4 [*struck*]: an idea strikes him.

He's just completely out of his mind, that's all: an ironic but friendly comment. Dr Bavliss does not believe in astrology.

5 *One look at a girl and he takes her temperature*: a humorous reference to the previous statement by Keller. Metaphorically, to take someone's temperature is to understand the person, to know the person's state of mind.

Over my dead body he'll be a doctor: I will not allow him to be a doctor.

stop talking like a civics book: that is, in terms of conventional civic principles.

Don Ameche: popular film actor of the 1930s and 40s; perhaps best known for his role as Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone.

on a Warner Brothers salary: on the very high salary which the film company in Hollywood, Warner Brothers, pays its famous stars.

scrawny: thin.

- 6 *block*: rectangular space in a city enclosed by streets and occupied by buildings.

The block can use a pretty girl: There are not many pretty girls in the block, and one would be welcome.

[*in same spirit*]: in the spirit of ironic, semi-humorous hostility.

you dog: (not to be taken seriously, but relates to the imagery of sniffing that follows).

Such is the condition that prevails: That's how things are between my wife and myself (again, not to be taken seriously).

Don't sniff around me: Sue says this to her husband because he comes near her and half-ironically calls her 'my love, my light'. She humorously repulses his advances.

candy: a confection made of sugar ; chocolate.

to lay down: to lie down, rest.

a trip around the world for thirty years: in other words, why doesn't he leave his home virtually for ever. (This is meant to be a joke.)

needle him: irritate or annoy him by being critical.

parsley: green herb, with strongly scented leaves, used in cooking.

robust: strong and energetic.

The toaster is off again: It's not working.

Thomas Edison: (1847-1931) American inventor of the telegraph and telephone system and of the phonograph, as well as the incandescent lamp and the electricity distribution necessary for its use.

handy: good with his hands, can work well with things requiring some manual skill.

get: hit.

she's a knockout: she's very beautiful, she makes a striking impression.

what we did with her house: how we redesigned it and furnished it.

she seems to be over it: she seems to have recovered from the shock.

It changed all the tallies: The war changed human values and assumptions.

- 8 *without a trigger finger*: without the finger used for pulling the trigger of a gun, making the man useless as a soldier.

don't plug in the malted mixer: the electric mixer for making malted drinks, that is, milk reinforced with some germinated grain, usually barley, and then flavoured.

I'll never hear the end of this one: that is, there isn't going to be an end to their quarrels over the mixer.

have a malted: a malted drink.

listener: man who listens more than he speaks.

book section: that section of a newspaper in which reviews of and articles on books are published.

to keep abreast of my ignorance: to know how much I don't know. To keep abreast of advancing knowledge is to know it well, to be well-informed. Chris suggests that he is in no position, because of his job, to be up-to-date in facts and ideas. All he can hope for is to realize, by reading how little he knows. In this he is made out to be more mature than his father who is essentially an ignorant man.

9 *oilstone*: a stone on which a knife or blade is sharpened.

taking a reading: taking the temperature with the use of a thermometer.

oral: by putting the thermometer in the mouth.

Now you're talking, Bert. Now you're on the ball: Now you're saying something important. Now you are alert to your responsibilities, you are being smart and proving yourself capable of action.

10 *I betcha*: I bet you.

gimme: give me.

eyes peeled: eyes wide open, intent on noticing what has to be noticed.

11 *mum's the word*: let's keep it secret.

I figured: I decided.

12 *always pays off*: always has consequences, unpleasant in this case.

You can talk yourself blue in the face: You can talk endlessly till you are exhausted.

13 *goddam*: an abbreviation of god-damned.

some boy turns from nowhere: some soldier reported missing and presumed dead returns home.

throws a fit: (colloquial) is outraged, becomes almost hysterical.

You have such a talent for ignoring things: You evade or avoid facing unpleasant realities. This remark by Chris about his father is early evidence in the play that he has some knowledge of his father's character.

gotta: got to, or have to.

14 *thrash it out with*: discuss it thoroughly with

fella: fellow.

fast with women: quick at making friends with women.

diagram: drawing to explain the relationship between Chris and Ann. Chris means that his father should not expect him to explain in detail how he and Ann feel about each other.

You marry that girl and you're pronouncing him dead: If you marry Ann it can only be on the assumption that Larry is dead.

- 15 *sucker*: fool; person easily deceived or tricked.
through with it: have had enough of it, finished with it.
grub for money: work hard for money.
the whole shootin' match: all my life-work.
- 16 *I'm a pretty tough guy*: I'm a realistic, practical person, who cannot be easily deceived.
pail: bucket for garbage.
scoured: washed thoroughly.
why I have to take out the garbage: why I have to carry the garbage from the kitchen and put it where it will be taken away by a municipal van. This is done by the man of the American household as one of his domestic duties. Keller feels that since he is rich, the work should be done by a servant.
That settles you for today: that is, the argument over the removal of garbage should shut him up for the rest of the day.
I'm in last place again: I'm considered of no importance (because of my mistake in putting a bag of potatoes in the garbage pail).
- 17 *It's her day off, what are you crabbing about?*: It's the maid's weekly holiday, why are you complaining?
what do I stumble over?: what do I find unexpectedly?
as soon as it happened with her fella: as soon as she heard that the man she was going steady with or engaged to, had been killed in the war.
- 19 *we never took up our lives again*: we never returned to our normal lives.
let's break out of this: let's stop talking about it.
- 20 *Swell with me*: It suits me very well, I'd love to do it (dine out, as proposed by Chris).
- 21 *dast*: durst, or dares to.
[exasperated]: greatly irritated.
a man turned up in Detroit, missing longer than Larry: a soldier reported missing and presumed dead for a longer time than Larry, returned home.
- 22 *backs up*: takes one or two steps backward.
that jail business: that game with Bert about Bert being a policeman and Keller being in charge of a jail, and so on.
[Her speech is bitten off]: She speaks as if biting her teeth, with great tension and difficulty.
[She leads off a general laugh]: She laughs and everyone joins her.
I couldn't resist: I couldn't resist wearing it.
How's that for three weeks' salary?: How does the dress look, considering it's worth three weeks' salary?
- 23 *gorgeous*: splendid, very beautiful.
kidding: joking.

hammock: cloth or netting hung by the ends, generally in the open, for use as a bed.

He had one of his light lunches and flopped into it: (ironic) He ate heavily and then jumped into the hammock, that's how it broke.

In the battalion he was known as Mother McKeller: In his army unit they called him Mother McKeller because he mothered, that is, took care of everybody.

24 *Raise some hell*: have a gay, noisy time.

25 [*it is drawing to a head the wrong way for her*]: the subject to which she wants to lead the conversation is coming up, but not in the way she wants it to.

do you go out much?: do you go out with men?

any of them serious?: are any of the men with whom you go out serious about marrying you?

Why don't you both choke?: Why don't you stop talking?

don't beat her over the head: don't be very persistent (in getting an answer to your personal question).

26 *Don't let them bulldoze you*: Don't let them (Chris and Keller) overrule you and prevent you from asking me personal questions.

helluva time: very enjoyable time ('helluva': hell of a).

28 *gee whiz!*: an expression of surprised admiration.

haberdashery: selling small articles of dress, ribbons, etc.

[*Funereally*]: sadly, as at a funeral.

parole: conditional release of a prisoner (on condition, for example, that he will not leave the city).

[*taking cue*]: taking a hint, an indirect suggestion (that he should not pursue the subject).

29 *He hands out police badges from the Post Toasties boxes*: Post Toasties is the name of an American breakfast food. Toy police badges and similar miniature replicas of animals and so on are oftengiven away free with the boxes.

30 *poker*: card game for two or more persons.

exonerated: declared guiltless in court of the charge made against him.

I pulled a fast one: I cheated very cleverly so that I was not caught though I was suspected.

one of the best shops: one of the best factories, commercial concerns.

Joe McGuts: A made-up name based on the phrase to have or show guts, which means to be courageous.

That's the only way you lick 'em is guts: The only way to compete successfully with other people is by being courageous.

- 31 *I never believed in crucifying people*: I never believed in punishing people excessively for their mistakes.
dragged you through the mud: damaged your reputation.
kinda: kind of.
- 32 *put that out of your head*: forget it.
cut it out: stop talking about it.
what was doin': what was happening.
whippin' us with the telephone: speaking to us repeatedly on the telephone, urging us to increase our production.
hauling them away hot, damn near: carrying the aeroplane cylinder heads away from the factory before they had cooled down completely from the manufacturing process.
- 33 *hairline crack*: tiny crack.
half a day's production shot: half a day's production wasted.
junk 'em: throw them away, scrap them.
shoulda: should have.
Can you stand steak?: Are you fond of steak? (Steak is a slice of fried meat, part of a popular meal in America. The question is not to be taken seriously.)
Now you're operatin'! I'll call Swanson's for a table. Big time tonight, Annie: Now you are responding in the right way to the situation. I'll reserve a table at Swanson's (an expensive restaurant). We are going to have a good time tonight.
wrap her up: get hold of her.
- 34 *Casanova*: (1725-98) Venetian author and adventurer whose name is associated with effortless conquest of women.
It went out of style: People no longer love their parents; it's not fashionable to do so.
I planned on kind of sneaking up on you over a period of a week or so. But they take it for granted we're all set: I had intended to persuade you, quietly and secretly in a week or so, to agree to marry me. But they assume that we are already engaged.
- 36 *to toss that off*: to forget it, to recover from its effects.
one new thing was made: human beings were beginning to realize a new truth.
the whole thing: the war.
that rat race again: contemptuous reference to a social system in which human beings compete with each other for money, power and privilege.
I felt—what you said—ashamed . . . that included you: This speech announces one of the themes of the play, that the war had not changed the attitudes of people, it had not improved them. Chris feels that this return to so-called normality—a competitive, egoistic world—was an insult to the men who had died in the war.

- 37 *What is this, Labor Day?*: Is it a day of celebration? The first Monday in September is observed in the U.S. and Canada as a holiday. It is devoted to the glorification of the working class. Labour Day is observed in other parts of the world on 1 May.

You shouldn't burst out like that: You shouldn't suddenly come out of the house in this way (surprising us kissing).

hot dogs: hot sausage sandwiches (sausage: chopped or minced meat packed in a tube of skin).

George Bernard Shaw as an elephant: Irish playwright (1856-1950). Shaw is considered to be very witty, with a mind that worked smoothly and fast, whereas an elephant is slow and heavy.

- 38 *you kissed it out of my head*: when I saw the two of you kissing completely forgot (that your brother's on the phone).

She'll cost him five dollars: The cost of the trunk call will go on increasing if she keeps her brother waiting.

Columbus: the city where Ann's father is in jail. George had gone to see him there.

She don't hold nothin' against me, does she?: She doesn't have anything against me, does she?

[*combatively*]: aggressively, with greater conviction.

- 39 [*overriding*]: overwhelming, very strong.

- 40 *I'll go to work on Mother*: I'll start trying to persuade Mother.

tuxedos: dinner-jackets worn on formal occasions.

mystified: puzzled.

- 41 *I don't read minds*: I can't explain or interpret the significance of his action.

ACT TWO

- 42 *We're dumb*: We are slow to understand.

- 44 *for the neighbors they'll always cut the grass*: they'll do any odd job for the neighbours, like mowing the lawn.

all nerved up: tense.

- 45 *intern*: young doctor who is completing his training by residing in a hospital and acting as an assistant physician or surgeon there.

- 46 *Research pays twenty-five dollars a week minus laundering the hair-shirt*: Research isn't paying at all. Besides, one has to put up with a lot of discomfort.

He meets a man and makes a statue out of him: He tends to idolize people, to worship them for their good qualities.

cast aspersions: say false or unkind things.

I resent living next to the Holy Family: I feel bitter about living next door to a family that thinks so highly of itself. The family of Jesus is referred to as the Holy Family.

It makes me look like a bum: It makes me look like a worthless person.

- 47 *But if Chris wants people to put on the hair-shirt let him take off his broadcloth:* To wear a hair-shirt is to punish oneself for a wrong one has done or thinks one has done; to wear broadcloth is to wear a garment of fine, woollen cloth and, therefore, to be enjoying oneself.

phoney idealism: false idealism; being hypocritical about high ideals which one announces or appeals to, but does not practise.

I'm at the end of my rope: I don't know what to do next.

all worked up: tense.

she's psychic: she's sensitive to or in touch with that which cannot be explained physically—she's spiritual, capable of knowing without observation or reasoning.

- 48 *What's hit you?:* What's come over you?

I'm not here out of a blue sky: I am not here by chance or accident but deliberately.

- 49 *Playland:* a permanent fairground near New York City.

extra special: more than unusual.

you slippin'?: Are you losing your self-control, your firmness, your grasp of the situation in which you are?

The great roue: 'roué', French word for a person with loose sexual habits. Chris uses the word affectionately in relation to his father.

- 50 *it's comin' to a pass:* it is becoming a difficult situation.

Don't surround me: Don't put pressure on me.

knock himself out: tire himself out.

cut-throat competition: competition which is likely to ruin the weaker competitors.

set up: provide with means of making a living.

- 53 *There's blood in his eye:* His intentions are anything but friendly.

on the edge of his self-restraint: about to lose control of himself, to lose his temper and say something rude.

- 54 *How'd you get to the station—Zeppelin?:* A Zeppelin was a cigarshaped airship supported by gas, usually helium, in use till the early thirties. Named after the designer, Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin (1838-1917). The question is asked ironically.

- 56 *voice of God:* expressed will or desire of God.

dive into things: rush into things hastily and without due consideration.

bulling: behaving like a bull, especially advancing forcefully.

turned upside down: thrown into great disorder.

- 57 *Are you through now?*: Have you finished speaking?

[surging up]: moving forward.

big shot: important person.

patsy: one who is duped or victimized.

rot: nonsense.

- 58 *look me in the eye*: look at me steadily.

mouse: timid person.

covered with blood: as a result of bloodshed and hence, ill-gotten.

- 61 *unabashed*: unembarrassed, without the slightest feeling of shame or emotional discomfort.

try for medals: to try for honour and fame.

Honest to God: honestly, truly.

it breaks my heart: it reduces me to despair.

- 62 *heavyweight*: boxer weighing 175 lb (79.45 kg) or more. Chris praises his mother's cooking.

avocado: pear-shaped tropical fruit.

- 63 *Ain't she classy?*: Doesn't she look elegant and stylish?

All she needs now is a Russian wolfhound: an ironic reference to the fact that aristocratic women often go about with expensive pet dogs.

- 64 *ahead of the draft*: the draft is the order in wartime that all able-bodied men above and below prescribed age-limits must join the army.

[reprimand]: scolding.

a catch in his throat: a feeling of tightness in the throat due to emotion.

- 65 *Eagle Scouts*: highest rank in the Boy Scouts of America. The reference is to the image of the boy scout as a wholesome, upright, kind and helpful boy who helps old ladies across the street.

Andy Gump: popular comic strip of the 1920s, 30s and 40s.

diapered: a diaper is a basic garment for infants consisting of a folded cloth or other absorbent material drawn up between the legs and fastened about the waist. Kate put on or changed George's diapers as an infant, and she has, therefore, known him since his childhood.

warts: small, hard growths on the skin.

- 66 *So-so*: not very good.

I wear the pants and she beats me with the belt: I am the master of the house but she punishes me as if I were a child.

It looks like General Motors: General Motors has one of the largest factories in the world.

67 *put him up against a wall*: to be shot by a firing squad.

68 *fire*: dismiss.

to save his face: to avoid losing his dignity.

[*driving in*]: exerting pressure.

swindler: person who cheats.

69 *date*: person of the opposite sex with whom one has a social engagement.

rings an old bell: brings something vaguely back to mind.

70 *junk*: nonsense.

72 *till Christ comes*: till the coming of Christ as judge on the last day.

maniac: madman.

75 *kick-back*: sharp, violent reaction, or complaint.

ACT THREE

79 *You can't bull yourself through this one*: You can't talk yourself out of this situation and hope to come out of it with your reputation unaffected.

It's one and one: It's as plain as the fact that one plus one makes two.

80 *What ice does that cut?*: Of what use would that be?

81 *I should have put him out when he was ten*: I should have made him take up a job at an early age.

earn his keep: earn his living.

how a buck is made: how a dollar is earned, how difficult it is to earn money.

quarter a day: quarter of a dollar a day, a very small payment for a day's work.

82 *his hair falls out*: he gets terribly upset.

85 *I'm yellow*: I'm a coward.

I spit on myself: I hate myself.

86 *This is the land... a zoo, a zoo!*: another major theme of the play, the destructive effect of a competitive society on personal relations and values.

87 *nickels and dimes*: money. A nickel is a U.S. five-cent coin; a dime is a U.S. coin worth one-tenth of a dollar.

88 *the whole crap story*: the whole dirty story (about the nature of society).

89 *Sure, he was my son... I guess they were*: the major insight of the play which comes to Keller at the end of it, that all those who died in the war were, in a sense, his sons.

You can be better!... that's why he died: The final statement of the playwright's motive in writing *All My Sons*, his commitment to the idea of every individual's responsibility to the society in which he lives and to humanity as a whole.

MODERN PLAYS FOR STUDENTS

Edited for students
with an introduction and notes

THE WINSLOW BOY

by Terence Rattigan

Edited by the Rev W.A.W. Jarvis

THE LIFE OF GALILEO

by Bertolt Brecht

Edited by A.G. Stock

ALL MY SONS

by Arthur Miller

Edited by Nissim Ezekiel

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

by T.S. Eliot

Edited by Nevill Coghill

THE FAMILY REUNION

by T.S. Eliot

Edited by Nevill Coghill

A PASSAGE TO INDIA

by Santha Rama Rau

Edited by V.A. Shahane

RIDERS TO THE SEA & THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

by J.M. Synge

Edited by R.K. Kaul

